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Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur

Janice Ann Mastromatteo

Date of Birth — Date de naissance

17/05/56

Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance

Canada

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe

Dept. of Sociology, U of A.

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse

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83.

Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse

Dr. P. Saram.

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OBJECTIVITY AND EMANCIPATION:
AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ROLE OF INTERESTS
IN HABERMAS'S CRITICAL THEORY

by

© JANICE MASTROMATTEO

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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. . . the truth of sociology is the derivative of an agreement reached (if at all) in the debate between sociologists and the objects of their study regarding phenomena whose control is shared between sociologists and their objects to the clear disadvantage of sociologists. The truth of sociology has to be negotiated in the same way the ordinary agreement is.

Z. Bauman

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Objectivity and Emancipation: An Interpretation of the Role of Interests In Habermas's Theory" submitted by Janice Mastromatteo in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

.....
Supervisor

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.....

Date 15 November 1982

ABSTRACT

In 1964, at Heidelberg, Habermas argued that there was in increasing separation of scientific knowledge from practical choice in the positivist philosophy of science. The onus of his argument was directed toward the untenability of the Kantian distinction between pure and practical knowledge for an epistemology of the social sciences. Habermas maintained that after Hegel's critique of Kant's transcendental logic. A critique of knowledge which included practical reason and reflective judgment had been removed from the philosophy of science. Habermas's critique was aimed at the type of positivist social science that endorsed a method of objectifying social reality and describing it as fact. Preconditions of meaning, presupposition, subjectivity, and historicity were being ignored. Underlying his critique was the demand for a return to critical reason in the classical sense, with the aim of integrating theory and practice in a new metatheory for the social sciences. As a consequence, Habermas advocated a practical self-reflective philosophy for a critical theory of society.

This thesis argues that there are certain fundamental contradictions to be found in Habermas's more recent doctrines that have lead to the contravention of his original goals for critical theory. Through an examination of the traditions Habermas has chosen to follow, and through

critical comparison of his early work with his later writings, we hope to substantiate the claim that Habermas has failed to provide the type of self-reflective epistemology for critical theory that was his initial goal. It is our contention that Habermas's 'consensus theory', the result of his attempt to formulate a methodology for verifying truth claims, falls prey to the same type of objectivistic stance he had so adamantly opposed.

It is our intention to provide support for the notion that Habermas's methodological propositions have become bounded by the idealistic conjecture that there exists an apriori interest structure determining the production of knowledge; a structure which can be defined independently in terms of ahistorical constants. Our conclusions indicate that Habermas has, to date, been unable to incorporate methodological categories for subjectively constituted meaning. We have sought to establish that Habermas has transgressed his goals for a dialectical metatheory because of his reliance on an idealist definition of truth.

Our aim was to trace what can be viewed as the objectivist dilemma in Habermas to his formulations of an apriori interest structure and its role in the determination of knowledge. After introducing the problems we wished to address in chapter one, the remainder of the thesis concerns itself with the goals Habermas initially outlined, the philosophical traditions he has chosen to utilize, and his methodological debates over objectivism. The final sections

are devoted to a critical analysis of Habermas's consensus theory of truth and the issues that surround it. Our concluding remarks can be summarized as an appeal to a partial relativism in the negotiation of validity claims in a methodology for the social sciences.

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I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Saram, not only for his assistance and support in helping me to complete what had come to seem an insurmountable task, but for the patience he so kindly allowed me throughout the preparation of this thesis. I would also like to acknowledge my appreciation to Dr. Golec for her guidance with early drafts, and to both Dr. Golec and Dr. Young for the many suggestions and criticisms they were good enough to offer on such short notice.

This thesis has been with me through many changes in my life and attitudes. It is my hope that it still reflects the ideas so generously rendered by my instructors.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the opening pages of Theory and Practice, Habermas distinguishes critical theory from both philosophy and the philosophy of science "Critique is distinct because of its reflections on its own origins" (1974a:8). Unlike the deductive method of naturalistic social science and also unlike the underlying presuppositions of a first-philosophy, Habermas's critical method was to be constructed in a non-premise fashion. Through the development of a new, dialectical metascience, Habermas believes he can overcome the separation of theory and practice that is the result of the objectivisms he associates with positivist social science and the idealism of transcendental philosophies.

Habermas's project is one with an epistemological, as opposed to an ontological, emphasis. Rather than begin with some normative premise as to what shall constitute prototypical knowledge Habermas maintains that ". . . the critique of knowledge must begin by abstaining from any pre-judgment about what is to count as science" (1974a:15). The illusion of objectivity is exemplified by a 'copy' theory of truth in the positivist philosophy of science. Alternatively, an appeal to the notion of 'pure' theory characterizes what Habermas sees as the objectivist illusion in certain traditional philosophies. In order to overcome

these false objectivisms Habermas has proposed a type of 'complementarity' model, one aimed at uncovering the metatheoretical bases of knowledge production.

Following the earlier Frankfurt theorists, Habermas wants to implant a new methodology in the social sciences; one built upon the reintegration of practical, normative issues, given what is seen as a separation of fact from value/theory from practice. What is suggested is a return to critical reason in the classical sense of the term. Through the critique of ideology Habermas hopes, ultimately, to uncover a methodology for discovering a 'new rationality'.

Habermas's critique of ideology and its relationship to a 'technocratic consciousness' has two interrelated, foundational aspects. On the one hand, Habermas wishes to develop the idea that post-industrial societies are dominated by a scientistic rationality. This thesis predominates in his more methodological writings, and deals more specifically with external (societal) outcomes of the relations between technology, science, and ideology (i.e., Towards a Rational Society, and Legitimation Crisis). Habermas maintains that traditional, value based orientations for action (practical), have been increasingly replaced by the purpose-rational mode of action. The scientistic rationality of post-industrialism has been the motor behind the subsumption of the practical realm, the outcome of which has been the cultural hegemony of a scientistic ideology (Habermas, 1971, 1973(a)(b), 1975(a)(b)). As a result of this stance, Habermas treats

what he sees as the false objectivity of scientistic rationalism as the fundamental cause of 'false consciousness'.[1]

The second component of Habermas's documentation of the relationship between science and ideology deals with the relation between the scientific enterprise itself, and the production of ideology. This has been variously referred to as his metatheoretical or internal critique (Giddens, 1976; Overend, 1978). More specifically, this aspect of Habermas's work refers to theoretical disputes with the neo-positivists.[2]

Both theses are rooted in the notion that the technocratic consciousness is guided by an apriori, technical cognitive interest in exploiting nature. The central thrux of this underlying thesis is the idea that the creation of a 'false-objectivity' via scientism, covers over this interest by giving the appearance of neutrality.

What has ultimately been subsumed, given the predominance of the technical cognitive interest, is both the effect of value-rational decisions at the level of scientific enquiry; and the effect of the practical operation of decision making on what is still a class based economy, at the external or societal level. What this suspicion of a pervasive false consciousness leaves Habermas to formulate is an alternative 'theory of truth'.

Critical theory condemns theories of absolute knowledge and formulas for ultimate truths. Yet, its purpose is the

merger of fact and value at the metatheoretical level which, in the final analysis, necessitates the development of a structure for defining the criteria for validating truth claims. It is the express purpose of critical theorists in general to introduce values into methodological analysis in order to expose ideological presupposition to rational criticism. And as the reference to 'false' consciousnes implies, there is a 'true' consciousness. Whether it be, as in the case of Marx, an ultimate determination of true from false consciousness; or as for Marcuse, a determination of a true from false 'needs'; or as for Habermas, a distinguishing of true from false consensus; in order to avoid the pitfalls of relativism, verification is an unavoidable problem.

The question then remains as to whether Habermas's model for verification of normative truth claims (the consensus model) does not lapse into just another model reliant on the transcendental justification of truth.

Habermas's post-1968 writing has been attacked for its 'radical reformist' posture and the resulting loss of a self-reflective epistemology (Wilson, 1978; Apel, 1972). It is possible to identify a shift in Habermas's work based on this transition to the adoption of a radical reformism and his increasing preoccupation with the formulation of a research program.

The shift can also be seen as a movement away from a dialectical approach which stressed the idea of ". . . the object's preponderance over the concept" (Wilson, 1978;190)

. . . or the belief that the concept cannot exhaust the thing conceived (Adorno, 1973;5) to an emphasis on strategy and interventionism. The transition can also be seen as a movement from an interest in subjectivity and self-reflection, to an emphasis on rational reconstruction. Finally, the shift can be summarized in terms of the loss of a critical stance towards objectivism and ontology and the subsequent emergence of these problems in the theoretical coherence of Habermas's work.

The development of a consensus model for verification of truth claims has entailed the elevation of ordinary language to a metainstitution, the domain where contradiction can be uncovered in Habermas's model. It is our aim to illustrate how Habermas creates a linguistic ontology and further, how he attempts to ground it in a type of emancipatory determinism which itself seems to fall prey to the same type of objectivism he had so adamantly opposed.

It is the purpose of this thesis to document the shift in Habermas's work through critical analysis; and further, to attempt to show that there exists a basic dilemma in Habermas's doctrines, one which has its genesis in his conceptualization of a tripartite, apriori interest structure. We also hope to substantiate the claim that Habermas's humanist leanings, which can be evidenced in his belief in an eventual coincidence of freedom and reason stemming from an inherent human interest in emancipation, have lead him to a type of transcendently acquired criterion of truth.

1. Problem

It is our intention to provide support for the argument that Habermas has been unsuccessful in his attempt to provide a metatheory that would encompass the self-reflective subject and the dialectical qualities of the relationship between the technical and practical realms. In his most recent works, Habermas has been primarily concerned with the creation of a research program based on the model of critical theory he had developed earlier. His conceptualization of interests and the relationship between interest, knowledge, and action form the central theoretical base upon which this program has emerged.

Although Habermas's conceptualization of interests seems ambiguous, which becomes apparent if one attempts to sort through the multiplicity of defining statements, there does seem to be a major shift in their usage. In Habermas's early work interests can be interpreted as not independent of one another but as dialectically interdependent; and they also can be represented as 'ideal constructs', so that they are not construed as existing in reality (Habermas, 1968).

Since Habermas's focus turned to the development of a research program and the issue of legitimation crisis in late capitalist societies developed as a central practical concern, the utilization of his idealized constructs has become highly controversial. At the center of this controversy is Habermas's suggestion that because of an

emancipatory cognitive interest, the possibility of justifying truth claims through rational discourse can become a reality (Overend, 1979). As a consequence of this claim, 'idealized consensus' can no longer be interpreted as merely a heuristic guide; but it has instead taken on the function of justifying intervention into the practical realm because of Habermas's assertion that verification of validity claims can occur even if only through the best approximation of a 'rational discourse' (i.e., Legitimation Crisis, part III).

In contrast, Habermas initially maintained a clearly Marxist stance toward the use of 'constants' in social science. Support for the notion that Habermas originally employed a negative-dialectic approach to the concept of interest can be relatively easily extrapolated from some of his early works. For instance, in Knowledge and Human Interests he says,

> The concept of "interest" is not meant to imply a naturalistic reduction of transcendental-logical properties to empirical ones. Indeed, it is meant to prevent just such a reduction (1968:1966).

This type of statement gives evidence in support of the idea that Habermas took an anti-anthropological stance, as did the earlier Frankfurt theorists. Yet there seems substantial reason to argue that Habermas has increasingly moved toward the adoption of an anthropological stance himself (Lepenies, 1971; La Capra, 1977).

This shift in Habermas's work can be traced to his formulation of a 'technocratic thesis' (i.e., Toward a Rational Society, and, Legitimation Crisis), the outcome of

which has been the categorizing of 'labor' and 'interaction' into dichotomous, polar opposites. What is suggested in his technocracy thesis is the subsumption of the practical realm by the technical, which necessarily implies the demise of Marxist political economy. The result is the creation of ahistorical categories (i.e., technical interest, practical interest), and thus, ontological constants.

Although this argument will be dealt with at greater length, it is our purpose to provide illustration of a shift in Habermas's work and to lend credence to the notion that the result of the shift has been the loss of idealized constructions, and the forfeiting of a negative dialectic approach. A prefatory example of Habermas's current emphasis on constructing a philosophical anthropology of knowledge is provided in Theory and Practice. He says,

> . . . in the constitution of scientific object domains we merely extend the everyday procedure of objectifying reality under the viewpoints either of technical control or of intersubjective communication. These viewpoints express anthroplogically deep-seated interests, which direct our knowledge and which have a quasi-transcendental status (1974:9).

Another criticism that will be aimed at Habermas is one that is usually associated with Popper's 'critical rationalism'. It is the criticism of 'piece-meal social engineering'. In his latest works, Habermas assumes that objectivity can be realized through the operation of rational discourse, and this assumption is used to justify the possibility of reaching a consensus over validity claims. This issue will be critically analyzed in order to support the

idea that Habermas is currently committing the same type of objectivism as was the focal concern of his previous attacks on positivism and modern philosophy.

Habermas's attempt to support a method of rationally justifying truth claims can also be subjected to the various criticisms traditionally aimed at humanist doctrines. An emphasis on ontology and the promotion of a false objectivity, are criticisms that are derivable from ideas like: the belief in man as basically good, the equating of reason with the will to reason, man's search for freedom, the notion of ultimate truth, and an underlying universal moral order. It is expected that this thesis will show that these notions are either implicit or can be explicitly illustrated as arising from the theory of an emancipatory cognitive interest and Habermas's consensus theory of truth.

Finally, the theories of 'Communication' (a universal pragmatics); 'Socialization' (acquisition of communicative competence); and 'Evolution' (reconstruction of historical materialism), will be analyzed with the expectation of providing substantial evidence of Habermas's emphasis on ontology, and the presence of objectivism in his recent work. An account of Habermas's theory of the development of ego-identity will be made in order to attempt to illustrate how it invokes the problem of ontological realism. His reconstruction of historical materialism and his program for a 'universal pragmatics' will be discussed with the aim of showing how they lead to a false objectivity. It appears

that these two criticisms can be equally levelled at each of Habermas's general theories, and an attempt will be made to substantiate this argument.

2. Theoretical Background

One way of approaching an analysis of Habermas is to focus on the concept of value-neutrality. The notion that scientists can suspend their own beliefs and values during the period of engagement with the subject of their scrutiny has been embedded in the conceptualization of the scientific method since its inception. However, the acceptance of the idea of the objectivity of the scientist, gained through an objective scientific method has tended to mask the concept of value-relevance at the theoretical level of analysis. By resurrecting the notion of value-relevance, the question can be asked as to the impact of theory choice, presuppositions, and assumptions brought into theory construction and alternatively, the effect of the evaluation of uses of scientific results on the assumption of value-neutrality (Hesse; 1978).

Further, it would seem the proposition that theories are constrained but are underdetermined by facts (Hesse) or expressions (Quine), holds true not only for the social sciences, but the natural sciences as well. As a consequence of this, the discussion of values, presuppositions, and

theory choice is a necessary corollary in science, but particularly for the human sciences.

When natural science is considered in terms of its early positivist form and the doctrine aimed at assimilating social science towards those factors associated with it (i.e., control, prediction, and immutable laws), value-freedom becomes a much larger issue. This was the view Habermas adopted in his early works and that which in fact, established the focal concern of his critical assessments of objectivity in both science and philosophy. Habermas's criticisms were aimed at the masking of interest under the guise of scientific objectivity, and at a more abstract level, the subsumption of the practical realm by the technical. However, to consider Habermas's writings in this area, in isolation, would be to unfairly circumscribe his endeavours. Instead, the issues that have emerged from the methodenstreit, and Habermas's subsequent role in the various debates surrounding 'geisteswissenschaften' should be established in order to give the attempt at surveying his works a broader perspective.

Erklaeren:Verstehen

The controversy over the appropriate epistemology for the moral sciences known as the methodenstreit or erklaeren-verstehen, can be traced to the naturalist-humanist split which arose during the Enlightenment. Critical to the debate were the reactions of the German idealists (i.e.,

Schleiermacher, Scheler, Dilthey) to the attempts at assimilating humanist disciplines towards the methodology of Newtonian science. Their attack was directed at the treatment of man as a fact of nature, and the empirical-analytic method of objectifying reality and treating it as fact. In contrast, they maintained that man should be viewed, in the mode of the action tradition, as a construct; one possessing some particular qualities non-existent in nature.

Although the conceptualization of verstehen has undergone various changes over time, opposition to a mechanistic type of social science aimed at the prediction, explanation, control of objective conditions, and the attempt at law-like generalization has remained.

The first phase of the verstehen tradition can be said to have culminated in the work of Frederick Dilthey. Emphasis was placed upon the subjectivity of human action and thus, the necessary separation of understanding (involving reliving 'Erlebnis'--of events via historical analysis) from scientific explanation.

Later, Max Weber was to reject the idea of the exclusive reliving of a verstehen method and attempt an integration of causal explanation into the methodology of the human sciences. Weber emphasized that complete interpretive explanation would require not only a grasp of subjective meaning, but also a casual explanation.

More recently, the hermeneutic tradition has been influenced by phenomenology. This can be seen most specifically in the work of Gadamer. The phenomenology Gadamer has drawn upon however, is not that of the transcendental consciousness, based on a knowledge free of presupposition. Rather, it is a hermeneutic phenomenology, characterized by the pre-eminence of the linguistic character of 'being in the world', found in the works of Heidegger and later, Paul Ricoeur.[3]

For Gadamer, verstehen is not seen as a method, but as the condition of life and human subjectivity. Language is the medium of understanding. Verstehen is thus ". . . the mediation of traditions through dialogue, where tradition is the frame of meaning constituted by a language community--a form of life" (Gadamer, 1965:121). Gadamer would also suggest that there is no escaping the historicity of any particular tradition and as a consequence, knowledge is bound to historic conditions. However, the understanding of traditions is possible, and the 'authenticity' of a tradition enables the interpreter to learn the 'truth'. Although Habermas's hermeneutic interest in incorporating historicity and subjectivity is similar to Gadamer's, he has engaged in a longstanding debate with Gadamer over both 'truth' and 'method' in hermeneutics. A discussion of the nature of this debate will be presented in a following section.

The schism between the empirical-analytic and the historical-hermeneutical traditions has persisted because of the continuing dissent over the issue of a methodological model for the social sciences (biology and physics vs. history). Unfortunately, most arguments tend to polarize the distinction between the natural and humanist views of man. As a result, the central area of concern has remained one of differences in ontologies. Both sides continue to label the other reductionist. (Empirical social science is accused of reducing reality to 'fact' by objectifying social phenomena, ultimately creating some form of arbitrary decisionism. The historical-hermeneutic methodologies are accused of relativism or conversely, historicist determinism). As a consequence of this continued polarity, the empirical philosophy of science and the hermeneutic sciences remain predominantly uncompromising towards one another.

The reason why Habermas's works appear fundamentally important in terms of the methodenstreit debate is because of his attempts to go beyond the critiques of positivism associated with the Frankfurt school. A primary aim of Habermas's work is the search for means to mediate science and philosophy by answering epistemological questions rather than merely debating ontologies. It is Habermas's purpose to ". . . show what logical relations connect them (generalizing sciences and hermeneutics) on the level of epistemology" (Habermas, 1979:3).

3. The Goals of Habermas's Critical Theory

The meeting of the German Sociological Association in Heidelberg in 1964 reopened the methodenstreit. This time the controversy focused on Max Weber's doctrine of value-freedom. The neo-Marxist position, represented by Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Habermas, emphasized the growing separation of scientific knowledge from practical choice in the positivist philosophy of science.

At its most fundamental level the argument was concerned with the untenability of the Kantian distinction between pure (theoretical) knowledge and practical knowledge for an epistemeology of the social sciences. Habermas's position as it was represented in Heidelberg is perhaps an appropriate departure for an attempt at a coherent survey of his initial goals for critical theory.

Thomas McCarthy has outlined the goals Habermas set out for a reconstructed form of critical theory in 1963. Habermas wanted to create a critical theory that would be

> . . . empirical and scientific without being reducible to empirical-analytic science, philosophical in the sense of critique but not of presuppositionless first philosophy, historical without being historicist, and practical in the sense of being oriented to an emancipatory political practice but not to technological administrative control (McCarthy, 1976:vii).

These goals represent what, if they reach fruition, would be the culmination of a critical theory that would mediate between arbitrary decisionism and historicist determinism.

Habermas distances his work from the verstehen tradition by replacing the notion of the need for different forms of

inquiry in the natural and social sciences (based on the claim that the nature and relationship of the observer to the subject-matter are different). Instead, Habermas distinguishes empirical-analytic science from the cultural sciences by maintaining they are founded on different cognitive interests. He says:

> . . . empirical analysis discloses reality from the viewpoint of possible technical control over objectified processes of nature, while hermeneutics maintains the intersubjectivity of possible action-orienting mutual understanding (1968:191).

In order to emphasize the need for a critical theory of society, Habermas' early works focused on an illumination of the objectivisms of both science and philosophy. Subsequently, much of his criticism was aimed at the masking of interest under the guise of scientific objectivity. Habermas has formulated a materialist foundation for a theory of science in an attempt to ground a structure that can be used to compare the institutional aims of the natural and humanist sciences, which in turn will illuminate the differences in the internal cognitive structures of the sciences. In essence, Habermas is attempting to develop a new, dialectical metascience.

Following the earlier Frankfurt theorists and their interest in the radical type of critique initiated by Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, Habermas stresses the separation between fact and value. Like Horkheimer and Marcuse before him, Habermas is concerned with the cleavage between ". . . fact and value, description and evaluation, science and

criticism" (1975:ix), which has persisted in the empiricist tradition because of the principle of value-neutrality. Consequently, Habermas has been developing his own solutions for overcoming the empirical-normative split. Ultimately however, any solutions he may advocate must deal with the problem of establishing the boundaries and conditions of theoretical truth.

Amalgamating Science and Criticism

The focus of Habermas' early work was on the elimination of the problems of the false-objectivity that can result from a positivist methodology (the objectivism of not analyzing presupposition, theory choice, historicity, subjectivity, etc.). Habermas suggests that methodological discussions carried on under the label of logical positivism (i.e., discussions of the utility of an analytical framework, the expedience of research strategies, the choice of methods, the fruitfulness of hypotheses, the interpretation of results etc., are metatheoretical discussions, and do not follow rules different from those of any critical discussions of 'practical' questions. In contrast to the formulation of deductions at the theoretical level, metatheoretical arguments ". . . rationalize attitudes by means of the justification of a choice of standards" (Habermas, 1971:7). As a consequence of this stance, Habermas would assert that self-reflection, traditionally the reserve of philosophy, should be applied in all the sciences.

Habermas' aim is the incorporation of the critical analysis of values and presuppositions at the metatheoretical level of theory construction. What he wants to accomplish is the integration of aspects of a number of 'action' approaches at this level, including: phenomenology (Schutz and Garfinkel), linguistic sociology (Wittgenstein and Winch), and hermeneutics (Gadamer's incorporation of historicity and subjectivity (Wolff, 1975:811-827). However, Habermas wants to go beyond hermeneutics, and thus beyond the level of 'understanding' subjectivity (Wolff, 1975:811-827). He wants to provide a critical theory that will uncover the genesis of meaning and traditions. He says,

> Confronted with the idealism of the hermeneutics developed for the sciences of the mind, critical sociology guards itself against reducing the meaning complexes objectified within social systems to the contents of cultural tradition. Critical of ideology, it asks what lies behind the consensus, presented as fact, that supports the dominant tradition of the time, and does so with a view to the relations of power surreptitiously incorporated in the symbolic structures of the systems of speech and action (from Theory and Practice, in Wolff, 1975:824).

Habermas's aim is the construction of a new, 'objective' science of society. The corresponding methodology would be dependent on the development of what he considers is a logically consistent depth-hermeneutic--taken from Freud's model of psychoanalysis. However, this goal is Habermas's specification of the differences in cognitive aims of the sciences, a distinction which is based on a concept of 'quasi-transcendental cognitive interests'. Given his goals, and the primacy of 'interests' in Habermas's work, critical

theory would ultimately culminate in the possibility of ideal speech situations based on a consensus theory of truth.

In order to philosophically ground a critical notion of truth Habermas, following Horkheimer, attempts a materialist radicalization of Hegel's dialectical approach. With the aim of somehow coming between science and philosophy, Habermas incorporates the category of the historical subject--the knowing actor--into his framework. Therefore, he gives up, ". . . the theologically motivated belief that progress--whatever it might be--is in any way guaranteed. . ." (McCarthy, 1975:xi), since history becomes dependent on not only 'interaction' (symbolically-mediated communication), but also upon the decisions and actions of historical subjects.

However, Habermas is left with a necessarily, context-bounded critical theory, since the concept of a universal history in the Hegelian sense is rejected. What remains is the rule that, ". . . thought rooted as it is in actual history, can never survey the whole of history as a pre-given totality" (1975:xi). Therefore, Habermas has the problem of formulating a concept of truth since his materialistic critique rejects Hegel's concept of a system of total truth.

Critical theory, with its fundamental concern for uncovering ideological interests (and assimilating toward an emancipation of truth and freedom), is either left with merely 'interpretation' of human action, and thus the hermeneutical problem of relativism; or alternatively, leaves itself open to the criticism of objectivism (i.e., the question can be

asked as to why critical theory itself would not be susceptible to ideological presupposition).

Habermas's answer to the problem of presupposition in critique would seem to lie in the realization of 'undistorted communication' the possibility of which, in turn, is grounded in an emancipatory interest. However it is at this juncture that Habermas's work becomes increasingly problematic. One dilemma can be seen in the status of cognitive interests and their relationship to one another. R. Bubner points to indiscriminancies in terminology when he says, ". . . interests regularly denote empirical or naturalistic leanings which require critical exposure, 'cognitive interests' are elevated to the level of apriori certitude and thus at least partially shielded against further theoretical inquiry (Bubner, What is Critical Theory, in Dallmayr, 1972:217).

Habermas himself has conceded to a lack of clarity in his formulation of the relationship between interest and knowledge. He maintains there is a need to, ". . . differentiate more clearly between empirical interaction and the validation of knowledge claims" (Habermas, in Dallmayr, 1972:218). However, even given that the status of interests remain undefinitive in Habermas's writings, there seems at least one significant change in their role.

Habermas's early work was characterized by an emphatic disavowal of the use of anthropological constants. He criticized attempts, at,

> . . . cataloguing anthropological constants, by stating that a science which clung to such constants would become uncritical, and would finally lead up to a dogmatism with political implications, a danger that was so much the greater since it would claim the objectiveness of science (Lepenies, 1971:214).

This anti-anthropological stance can be confirmed by reference to his own work on interests. Habermas says, ". . . the concept of "interest" is not meant to imply a naturalistic reduction of transcendental-logical properties to empirical ones" (1968:196).

However, there has been a shift in Habermas's work away from this critical attitude toward the use of constants. This shift can be traced to the polarization of 'labor' and 'interaction' which stems from the dichotomizing of technical and practical interests. Habermas can now be interpreted as accepting the use of ahistorical, and thus universal, invariant categories. The result can be characterized as a shift to 'rational reconstruction', with the subsequent loss of dialectical analysis and the self-reflecting, epistemological subject (LaCapra, 1977:255). Although an attempt at substantiating this claim will be left to following sections, some prefatory remarks concerning the general nature of 'interests' in Habermas's work are in order.

Underlying Habermas's program for establishing a consensus theory of truth is the thesis of the interest constituted nature of knowledge. Habermas has drawn upon Dilthey's differentiation between types of knowledge and the respective interests. Interests are given an apriori status in Habermas's framework. He says, "I term interests the

basic orientations rooted in specific fundamental conditions of the possible reproduction and self-constitution of the human species" (1968:196).

Distinct cognitive interests underlie the technical, practical, and critical-emancipatory realms. In addition, knowledge can take on three possible forms including ". . . information that expands our power of technical control, interpretations that make possible the orientation of action within common traditions, and analyses that free consciousness from its dependence on hypostatized powers" (1968:313). The three forms of knowledge are linked to the mediums of social organization and self-formation which include: work, language, and power, respectively. Knowledge-constitutive interests become recognizable in these mediums. Finally, the specific knowledge-constitutive interests (which arise from work, language, and power), also correspond to three modes of inquiry: naturalism, hermeneutical interpretation, and critical theory (Figure 1).

It is from this tripartite structure arising from Habermas's affirmation of pragmatism's notion of interest constituted knowledge that he believes a new critical metascience can emerge; one based on an inherent human interest in emancipation from constraint. Fundamental to his program for uncovering the metatheoretical bases of knowledge production are: the use of a dialectical method for uncovering presupposition (or ideology), a psychoanalytic

FIGURE I

Interconnections Between Habermas's Media, Research-Interests and Types of Knowledge

I MEDIA: (Medium of conduct of life)	WORK	LANGUAGE	GOVERNING ("steering")
II RESEARCH-INTEREST	TECHNICAL-INFORMATION (external to research group)	HERMENEUTIC	EMANCIPATORY
III a. TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE:	INFORMATION	INTERPRETATION	CRITICISM (reveals real forces and facilitates their steering and control)
b. TYPES OF APPROACHES:	NATURALISTIC	HERMENEUTIC	CRITICAL SOCIAL SCIENCE (Critical theory)
c. TYPES OF PROCESSES:	OBJECTIVE	TEXT-INTERPRETATION	POSSIBILITIES AND NORMS OF BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

(Adopted from Sutherland, 1979:236).

method for reconstructing self-formative processes, and a consensus theory of truth. However, underlying these methodological choices is Habermas's particular formulation of what is to constitute a self-reflective science of man. His adoption of a self-reflective epistemology and the traditions he has drawn upon in developing his theory are the subject of the following chapter.

NOTES

1. The ideological distortion, designated scientism, can be seen as the fundamental determinate of false consciousness (Overend, 1978:3).

2. The dispute over whether Habermas is maintaining there is a logical relation between scientific methodologies and the information they produce will not be addressed. The issue dealt with here is that of objectivism as the outcome of logical positivism's reliance on presenting the world as a description of facts.

3. A comprehensive examination of the verstehen tradition from Dilthey forward is presented by Anthony Giddens, "Habermas on Hermeneutics", In J. W. Freiberg (Ed.), 1979:39-70.

CHAPTER II

SELF-REFLECTION AND CRITICAL THEORY

Habermas advocates the use of a self-reflective methodology in his attempt to overcome the objectivist illusion he associates with the arbitrary decisionism of the empirical-analytic sciences and the historicism of the interpretative sciences. The meaning he attaches to the notion of self-reflection is not immediately obvious however, since it has an historical character.

Habermas's use of a critical form of self-reflection can be likened to that put forward in various other radical critiques. Aims such as: a reduction of illusion, the uncovering of false consciousness, the release of underlying ideological presupposition, and the use of a critical (depth-hermeneutic) method, are represented in works as diverse as those of Freud, Marx and Nietszche. Habermas's model can be seen to share these aims, yet the particular traditions he has drawn upon must be distinguished in order to attempt to substantiate a critique of his model.

Habermas bases the distinction he draws between critique and the methodologies of the sciences on the ability of a critical method to reflect upon its "own origins" (1974:3). The illusion of objectivism in both positivism and historicism is traced, by Habermas, to the concealment of interest in undisclosed presupposition. As a consequence,

his is an attempt to provide a critical metatheory that will allow for the freeing of the distorted communication of systematically controlled knowledge production. His claim that information is necessarily bounded information in the sciences is grounded in his position towards the relationship between interest and knowledge.

Habermas maintains that knowledge is interest constituted. He utilizes an extension of this notion by suggesting that information arising from science and philosophy is controlled by a technical and a practical cognitive interest respectively. Therefore, whereas empirical science poses technical questions aimed at the organization and control of goal-directed means, practical questions fall within the domain of the interpretative sciences and are, "posed with a view to the acceptance or rejection of norms" (1974:3).

The dichotomization of technical and practical interest is taken one step further when Habermas suggests that there is "a systematic relationship between the logical structure of a science and the pragmatic structure of the possible applications of the information generated within its framework" (1974:3). However, rather than taking a paradigmatic approach to knowledge, Habermas proposes a 'complementarity' thesis (Apel, 1972; Simmons, 1975).

Based on a dialectical interpretation of the relationship between the technical and practical realms, he sets out a program for merging a hermeneutic method at the

metatheroretical level of analysis. The solution is designed to provide a mechanism for uncovering the interests that underlie information generated within 'closed' systems of discourse. What Habermas suggests is that, although unrecognized, methods aimed at explanation of facts and those aimed at revealing intersubjective communication should not be polarized because they actually presuppose one another. K. O. Apel clarifies this point when he says:

> Nobody can just 'understand' without presupposing factual knowledge . . . and no natural scientist can explain anything without participating in inter-subjective communication (1972:312).

The fundamental proposal of a complementarity thesis of this sort is therefore, a method that can dialectically mediate between scientific and hermeneutic language systems.

In order to provide this reformulated critical method, Habermas draws on a succession of traditions associated with critical reasoning and self-reflective study. He believes that by reintroducing a self-reflective epistemology he can develop a methodology for uncovering ideological pre-supposition. The progression of literature he draws upon has its roots in the classical notion of negative reasoning. This progression deserves explication before a critical comment can be introduced.

1. The Foundations of Radical Critique

Habermas's use of classical Greek 'theoria' in the criticism he directs toward the illusion of objectivity in the sciences has its counterpart in his formulation of the

genesis of critical reflection. Negative or dialectical reasoning, like cosmology, can be traced to Greek schools of thought.

Dialectical thinking has its roots in the methods put forward by Plato (i.e., the unconcealment of truth) which required the use of 'reflective' negation in order to separate essences from appearances. It can also be traced to the Socratic method of dialogic, negative reasoning and the power of falsification in ruling out expressions of what is only appearance. In addition, the linking of theory and practice in the dialectical sense can be extracted from Socratic questioning in which there was assumed a need for uncovering the interest constituted nature of knowledge in order to reveal essences. Or as Schoyer suggests, Socractic critique was used to uncover conventional mystification and thus "release a changed praxis in the individual's life" (1973:15).

However, as a consequence of Habermas's acceptance of the classical critical idea of negative reason, he also attempts to amalgamate the assumption of the emancipatory interest of reason into his systematization of cognitive interests. This humanistic notion of an emancipatory cognitive interest runs throughout Habermas's works. Although this idea underlies the onus of the criticism that will later be directed at his works, it is necessary to discuss the other traditions Habermas relies on in his attempt to vindicate his own methodological approach.

2. Habermas's Reformulation of Historical Materialism

The assumption of the possibility of realizing a unity between freedom and reason which arose with the Greeks, is articulated in Habermas's framework through an analysis of a movement from Kant, through Hegel, to Marx. Using the transitions which took place in this progression, Habermas attempts to ground a reformulation of Marx's materialist radicalization of Hegel.

Habermas's purpose for returning to Kant's work is twofold. First, he uses Kant to establish his concern with the separation of the philosophy of science from philosophy by referring to Hegel's critique of Kant's transcendental logic. This idea is used in the argument directed at objectivism in science. Second, and more salient to this discussion is Habermas's use of Kant in re-establishing the concept of self-reflection.

Habermas seeks the revitalization of the classical relationship of theory and practice. For this reason he dismisses Kant's separation of 'pure' and 'practical' knowledge (i.e., his inaugural address in Heidelberg). In conjunction with this rests Habermas's denial of Kant's delineation of physics as the source of prototypical knowledge for the study of man.

Although Habermas wants to utilize Kant's critique of knowledge, he disaligns his views from Kant's attempt at formulating presuppositionless philosophy, and thus,

criticises Kant's conception of science for its normative bias. Instead, ". . . the critique of knowledge must begin by abstaining from any prejudgment about what is to count as science" (1968:15). What Habermas means to do is to abstract the Kantian notion of self-reflective critique from its transcendental logical framework. He dismisses the notion of a presuppositionless epistemology and attacks Kant for condoning apriori, unrecognized assumptions. "From the very start the enterprise of a critique of pure speculative reason assumes the normative cogency of a specific category of knowledge" (1968:14).

Another Kantian conception that Habermas disavows for its normative status is the ego. Kant uses a ". . . complete, fixed knowing subject. . ." (Habermas, 1968:15) and in doing so implies that consciousness is prior to experience. Habermas uses Hegel's 'immanent' critique of Kant to establish his rejection of the Kantian ego. He says ". . . The observing consciousness of phenomenology knows that it itself is incorporated in the experience of reflections as one of its elements" (1968:16).

Habermas also uses Hegel's critique of Kant to enhance his own argument at an even higher level of generality. Through Hegel's critique of Kant's transcendental logical, Habermas wishes to illustrate the presuppositions underlying Kant's supposed presuppositionless philosophy. These presuppositions are subsumed by Habermas under the categories of pure versus practical reason, the 'self-conscious ego versus

the ego of 'free will', and the critique of knowledge versus the critique of rational action (1968:16, 17). Habermas relies on the argument that Hegel effectively abolished the concept of transcendental consciousness by radicalizing the critique of knowledge through the method of determinate negation (1968:19).

Hegel subjected the presuppositions of Kant's critique of knowledge to self-criticism, and thereby showed there could be no fixed point of determination (1968:19). Self-reflection then becomes the only method of uncovering the self-formative process.

> The critical consciousness with which the theory of knowledge begins its examination is obtained as the result of phenomenological observation as soon as the latter becomes transparently aware of the genesis of its own standpoint by appropriating the self-formative process of the human species (1968:19).

However, although Habermas extracts Hegel's radicalization of self-reflection and epistemology from his overall framework, he rejects Hegel's doctrine of absolute knowledge. For although Hegel revealed the embeddedness of consciousness in the individual historical learning process, he went on to align his views with the postulates of the philosophy of identity (Habermas, 1968:5), and thus to undermine critical reflection by accruing to an absolute idealism. The effect, Habermas wants to suggest, was the loss of Kant's inclusion of "practical reason and reflective judgment" (1968:4) in the critique of knowledge.[1]

Habermas uses Marx's materialist radicalization of Hegel in order to demonstrate how the objectivism of Hegel's

philosophy can be eradicated. Marxian materialism is drawn upon as a means of providing Habermas's epistemology with a subjective source of knowledge. Hegelian idealism forfeits the category of 'man the producer' to the philosophy of identity which, Habermas maintains, was the reason Hegel was hindered from ". . . unambiguously radicalizing the critique of knowledge" (1968:24).

Habermas wants to abstract a materialist critique from Hegel's idealist system. He wants to retain the concept of concrete negation without accepting Hegel's appeal to universal history. Consequently, he relies on Marx's critique as the source for inverting the historical subject (and thus the effects of man's decisions and actions) into Hegel's dialectical method. Habermas wants to use Marx's historical materialism to counter Hegel's idealist conception of absolute knowledge. For ". . . thought, rooted as it is in actual history, can never survey the whole of history as a pre-given totality" (McCarthy, In Habermas, 1975a:xi).

However, although Habermas utilized Marx's materialist revision of Hegel and thus his notion of the dialectical relationships between the forces and relations of production, he wants to remove what he designates as the scientistic aspect of Marx's philosophical works by reformulating historical materialism. Habermas uses Marx's concept of social labor as a synthesis ". . . as the category of mediating objective and subjective nature. . . ." (1968:29) in order to remove Hegel's idealist notion of history from

the conception of the evolution of the human species. Man's relationship with nature is seen by Habermas, as it was by Marx, to be mediated by social labor . . . "At the human level nature separates out into the subjective nature of man and the objective nature of his environment" (1968:27).[2] Yet although labor is recognized as a 'natural' process it is also embued with the special quality of being able to act upon the environment . . . "Although a natural process, labor is at the same time more than a mere natural process, for it regulates material exchange with nature and constitutes a world" (Habermas, 1968:28).

Habermas credits Marx with the recognition of the dialectical mediation between the forces and relations of production. Although Marx's theory was based on a model of production ". . . it does not eliminate from practice the structure of symbolic interaction" (1968:42). However, Habermas assigns this recognition to Marx's works on political economy alone. He suggests that while the dialectic was always recognized in Marx's methodological writings, it was reduced to instrumental action at the philosophical level because of Marx's conception of the role of science. He says:

> Thus, in Marx's works a peculiar disproportion arises between the practice of inquiry and the limited philosophical self-understanding of this inquiry. In his empirical analyses Marx comprehends the history of the species under categories of material activity and the critical abolition of ideologies, of instrumental action and revolutionary practice, of labor and reflection at once. But Marx interprets what he does in the more restricted conception of the species' self-reflection through

> work alone. The materialist concept of synthesis is not conceived broadly enough in order to explicate the way in which Marx contributes to realizing the intention of a really radicalized critique of knowledge. In fact, it even prevented Marx from understanding his own mode of procedure from this point of view (1968:42).

What Habermas is contending is that Marx lost sight of the relationship between the forces and relations of production in his movement toward the use of a natural scientific method for the study of man. The economic law of motion of modern society, depicted by Marx as 'natural law' after the model of physics, is used as an example of positivist ontology (Habermas, 1968:45). Habermas would therefore apply the same criticism he attaches to empirical-analytical methodology, that of equating natural-scientific knowledge with the production of knowledge itself. In essence, what Marx is seen to ignore is the effect of interests (technical cognitive interests) on the production of scientific knowledge when he attempts to illustrate the scientific character of his analysis.

By appealing to a positivistic conception of science at the philosophical level, Habermas suggests Marx loses the thrust of a critical-reflective method aimed at the uncovering of ideology. He says:

> Science in the rigorous sense lacks precisely this element of reflection that characterizes a critique investigating the natural-historical process of the self-generation of the social subject and also making the subject conscious of the process. To the extent that the science of man is an analysis of a constitutive process, it necessarily includes the self-reflection of science as epistemological critique (1968:46).

As philosophical categories, labor (forces of production) and interaction (relations of production) are reduced to instrumental action.

However, in order to correct what is seen as the reductionist aspect of Marx's epistemology, Habermas must introduce a methodology with the capacity to reveal the historical genesis of thought. This was also the task left the earlier Frankfurt theorists, and one that deserves extrapolation in order to shed some light on the context in which Habermas's own platform arose and the dilemmas it addressed.

3. Self-reflection and the Consensus Theory of Truth

Habermas rejects Marx's epistemology on the grounds that he reduces self-reflection to that gained through instrumental activity ". . . Marx deludes himself about the nature of reflection when he reduces it to labor" (1968:43). The source of this problem is attributed to Marx's limiting of what are actually two processes of synthesis to a synthesis through social labor alone. What Habermas is suggesting is that although Marx correctly revealed the two categories of social practice as 'instrumental action' and 'communicative action' he was wrong in his determination of 'the self-generative act of the species' when he connected their effect singularly to production. The result was that productive activity and the relations of production then

appeared ". . . merely as different aspects of the same process" (1968:53).

Habermas wants to draw a broader distinction between the technical and practical realms, and to do so he must present a 'new' radicalization of Hegel's dialectic. His argument against Marx's version of historical materialism focuses on what he feels is the need to further separate the 'self-generative process', acquired through productive activity, from the 'self-formative process', developed through critical-revolutionary activity, in a history of the self-constitution of the human species (1968:55). He says:

> . . . if the institutional framework does not subject all members of society to the same repressions, then the tacit expansion of the frame of reference to include in social practice both work and interaction must necessarily acquire decisive importance for the construction of the history of the species and the question of its epistemological foundation (1969:54).

Once the level of technological development has enabled the production of surplus, and thus its distribution, the role of the institutional framework must be considered for the effects it produces itself upon society. More specifically, Habermas points to the cleavage of society into classes and the role of the institutional framework in maintaining its segregation. The self-constitution of species then becomes more than the history of the increasing power of control over nature through labor. The suppression of men by the institutional framework must be equally considered. With the advent of class structure, society can

no longer be considered ". . . as one single subject" (Habermas, 1968:54).

Habermas clarifies this stance when he says:

> But as we now see, the self-formative process of the species does not coincide with the genesis of the subject of scientific-technical progress. Rather, this 'self-generative act', which Marx comprehended as a materialistic activity, is accompanied by a self-formative process mediated by the interaction of class subjects either under compulsory integration or in open rivalry (1968:54).

This stance has a corresponding impact on Habermas's particular construction of 'synthesis'. For in synthesis, as in the process of constitution of species, the relationship between man and nature cannot be limited to the restricted categorical framework of production (1968:55). The synthesis of technically exploitable knowledge which, through labor, leads to a substitution of machines for men, has its counterpart in the self-reflective capacity of interaction to lead to an eventual freedom from ideological delusion.[3]

Yet at least in his earlier works, Habermas is not delimiting a categorical separation between the production of technical and practical knowledge, nor their separation in actual historical situations. He is emphatic about the need to posit a dialectical relationship between the two realms. He says, ". . . The two developments do not converge. Yet they are interdependent" (1968:55). His purpose is to augment Marx by providing a dialectical framework for interpreting the relationship between the self-generative and self-formative processes and their synthesis ". . . Marx tried in vain to capture this dialectic of forces of

production and relations of production . . . 'dialectic' must remain unclarified as long as the materialist concept of the synthesis of man and nature is restricted to the categorical framework of production" (1968:55).

Synthesis, in Habermas's framework is designated as a dialectical synthesis of two processes. While synthesis through labor mediates the social subject with external nature as its objective, synthesis through struggle, ". . . mediates two partial subjects of society that make each other into objects" (1968:55) meaning social classes. Further, these processes are represented as dialectically interlocked; for as a synthesis through labor ". . . brings about a theoretical-technical relation between subject and object; synthesis through struggle brings about a theoretical-practical relation" (1968:56).

An interplay between the two processes is seen to lie in the production of knowledge. Knowledge is represented as a synthesis of ". . . experience and form of the mind" (1969:56), yet Habermas locates this synthesis in both processes of mediation, the technical and the practical. However, in order to ground the notion of the dialectical interplay between the formation of productive and reflective knowledge given the shortcomings of Marx's epistemology, Habermas finds it necessary to return to Hegel's treatment of dialectic ". . . The only model that presents itself for synthesis of the second sort (self-formation) comes from Hegel" (1968:56).

Yet at the same time Habermas, like Horkheimer before him, is faced with the problem of falling into the unscientific utopianism of the left-Hegelians. He must at once retain the Marxian disclosure ". . . of the mechanism of progress in the experience of reflection" (1968:43), and thus the significance of the knowing subject in history, while at the same time not submitting to a deterministic view of scientifically guided history nor to Hegel's concept of universal truth lodged in the philosophy of identity.

The Horkheimian Dilemma

In aligning his view with Marx's integration of the 'knowing subject', Habermas must incorporate a category which will reflect the effects of the decisions and actions of historical subjects into his framework. Consequently, he must give up the Hegelian ideal ". . . the theologically motivated belief that progress--whatever it might be--is in any way guaranteed" (McCarthy, In Habermas, 1975:xi), which also implies a rejection of Hegel's universal history and thus a rejection of universal truths.

If this view is accepted in its entirety however, it necessitates an adherence to a historical, context-bounded notion of truth. Truth could only be defined in terms of its limitedness, which leaves a critical method of determinate negation exhausted in relativism, since ". . . thought, rooted as it is in actual history, can never survey the whole

of history as a pre-given totality" (McCarthy, in Habermas, 1975:xi).

Critical theory must acquire a distinct notion of truth if it is to be as Horkheimer suggested ". . . a type of critique of ideology that refers every thought back to the historical situation in which it arose to the real context of interests behind it" (McCarthy, In Habermas, 1975:x). Otherwise critique is left with a relativistic 'interpretation' of human action, or alternatively leaves itself open to the problem of objectivism associated with the universalistic notions of truth it criticizes (i.e., If this last definition of truth were accepted, critical theory leaves itself open to the question as to why its truth claims would not be susceptible to ideological presupposition).

In an effort to overcome this dilemma of the verification of truth claims, Habermas constructs a model based on a 'linguistic' reformulation of historical materialism. He assigns to interest an apriori role in the constitution of knowledge.[4] However, although interests are assigned the position of what it is that establishes ". . . the unity of the constitutive context between action and experience" (Habermas, 1974a:9), in which knowledge has its roots; Habermas also maintains interests are, in turn, ". . . the result of a life-form dependent on labor and language" (1974a:9). The queries which have arisen over whether Habermas has retained the dialectical status he gives to interests here have been left to our later discussions

concerning his efforts to utilize a self-reflective method for verification purposes in a consensus theory of truth.

NOTES

1. The argument that has been presented was based predominantly on extractions from Chapter One of, Knowledge and Human Interests.

2. Habermas quotes Marx's definition of labor at some length in this section of Knowledge and Human Interests. Pertinent to this discussion is Marx's statement that, "Labor is above all a process in which man through his own action mediates, regulates, and controls his material exchange with nature" (Marx, In Habermas, 1968:27).

3. Although this conceptualization put forward by Habermas must be dealt with at greater length, at this point it may suffice to simply limit the discussion to his critique of Marx.

4. The nature of the dilemmas that arise from the role of interests will be discussed in following sections.

CHAPTER III

OBJECTIVISM

The inability to incorporate human subjectivity has been the central tenet of many criticisms aimed at a positivist philosophy of science. Works as diverse as Heidegger's existential phenomenology, Husserl's phenomenolgy, Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy and the neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt school, share the common intention of exploding the myth of objectivity which is associated with a naturalistic approach to the study of man. The basis of this commonality stems from the intention of recovering the classical notion of the relationship between thought and action, or theory and practice.

Much of Habermas's early work was devoted to the theme of the loss of the classical notion of praxis by a philosophy of science that became increasingly concerned with instrumental rationality and the reconstruction of technical rules which govern action. What Habermas suggests is that although social philosophy has benefited from the advent of scientific rigour and an increased production of knowledge, the practical doctrine and the recognition of the interdependency of theory and practice has been forfeited.

The classical doctrine is characterized by an inter-relationship between social philosophy and practical action. Habermas maintains,however, that this relationship

has been misinterpreted by both traditional philosophy and the philosophy of science. In order to outline the structure of theory and practice, it is necessary to make reference to works like Theory and Practice, and Knowledge and Human Interests.

1. The Roots of Objectivism

In his early work, Habermas attempted to show how the classical Greek notion of theory has been misconstrued by both traditional philosophy and the philosophy of the social sciences. What he attempts to articulate is that the idea of objective knowledge in both disciplines is based on a false conception of the meaning of classical 'theoria', and that the result has been the persistence of objectivisms. A scenario of this argument may serve as a background for establishing Habermas' purposes for choosing a critical methodology.

In the Greek tradition, theory implied 'theoria', or the process of gaining the ability to transcend the confinements of the conditions of human relations, and contemplate the cosmos. The term theory was derived from 'theoros' who was someone sent to 'view' public celebrations. Through theoria, he could transcend the event itself (Habermas, 1968:301). It is from this process that the concepts of transcendance and impersonal or objective observation can be seen to have been derived.

However, theoria was also a dialectical concept. As Schoyer points out, ". . . theoria was dialectically related, on the one hand to the dialogue between the active man within society, and on the other, to the theoretical transcendence of human thinking" (Habermas, 1975b:28). What was implied was that through theoria (or a theoretical attitude) one could undergo a 'mimesis', an enlightenment, which revealed the order of the cosmos. This was not simply a project of transcendence however, but necessarily included the transformation of the philosopher himself. Or as Habermas explains, the philosopher manifests the proportions of the cosmos, which he sees in nature, within himself "Through the soul's likening itself to the cosmos, theory enters the conduct of life" (Habermas, 1968:302). Further ". . . in ethos theory molds life to its form and is reflected in the conduct of those who subject themselves to its discipline" (1968:302).[2]

Although a dialectical relationship existed between theory and practice in the Greek tradition, the process of mimesis also implied the possibility of understanding the order of the cosmos, or the ideal world order. What was suggested was that true knowledge could be attained through the transcendence of the human environment into a oneness with the cosmos, and that there then occurred a reflection back upon the environment. Ultimately then, this process leads to a unity between theory and praxis.

Habermas suggests that this transcendence presupposed the separation between being and time, which forms the foundation of ontology (1968:301). He says, "Theory sets aside Being for the Logos as an entity purged of inconstancy and uncertainty" (1966:286).[3] In theoria the philosopher can separate himself from the temporal world and uncertainty, which allows him access to the laws of nature.

The significance of Habermas's explanation of the greek conception of theoria becomes apparent in his discussions of the assimilation of a positivistic philosophy of science toward what is perceived as the Greek ideal. Although it does share certain commonalities, Habermas maintains there has been a forfeiting of the original role of praxis as it appeared in the Greek tradition.

2. Objectivism and Positivism

The Greek notion of theoria is significant to an analysis of Habermas's early work because of the comparisons he draws between its definition and the self-understanding of the sciences. At a most general level, he suggests both the cultural and natural sciences share the classical conception of ". . . describing a structured reality within the horizon of the theoretical attitude" (1968:303). However, his comparison of theory in the Greek sense and its meaning for a positivist philosophy of science has a greater relevance.

For Habermas, the empirical-analytical sciences share the basic ontology of Greek theory. He says, ". . . both are

committed to a theoretical attitude that frees those who take it from a dogmatic association with the natural interests of life and their irritating influence; and both share the cosmological intention of describing the universe theoretically in its lawlike order, just as it is" (1968:303). The modern philosophy of science shares a belief in objectivity gained through method and a notion of the existence of universal laws which Habermas had distinguished as the ontology of 'Being' of the classical tradition. Yet positivism has provided an innovation to theory construction that has covered over the original meaning given to Greek theoria. The strict emphasis in modern positivism on the separation of fact and value abstracted from Kant's separation of pure and practical reason, and known variously as value freedom, neutrality, or objectivity, has resulted in the loss of the pragmatic functions of classical theory.

The practical efficacy which theory maintains in the Greek tradition represented by the relationship between theoria and kosmos, and mimesis and bios theoretikos (1968:304), has been usurped by the modern methodological prohibitions on 'prescriptive' analysis. Whereas the aim, of Greek theoria was the achievement of a unity between the 'is' and the 'ought' and thus the incorporation of knowledge into the practice of life, scientism makes the claim of objective neutrality and the corresponding banishing of values from the description of fact.[4] As Habermas summarizes, "The

conception of theory as a process of cultivation of the person has become apocryphal" (1968:304).

In attempting to separate fact and value a positivist philosophy of science must presuppose the possibility of separating knowledge from interests. That this is a fallacious separation created by the illusion of objectivity, is the idea that forms the core of Habermas's argument.

In contrast to positivistic methodological tenets, Habermas argues that underlying both the institutional aims and the social practice of the empirical-analytical sciences is a deeply-rooted cognitive interest. He describes this interest as one directed at prediction and control over social behaviour through the formation of rules, formulated by a technical cognitive interest. Underlying this notion is the idea that, ". . . there is systematic relationship between the logical structure of a science and the pragmatic structure of the possible applications of the information generated within its framework" (Habermas, 1974a:8).

Further elaboration of this notion, and a discussion of the implications arising from the conceptualization of interests in Habermas's work will be left to a following section. The criticisms he aims at positivism's 'copy theory' of reality however, share certain characteristics in common with critiques put forward by a wide variety of other anti-positivists (i.e., Schutz, hermeneutic theorists, Cicourel, etc.). A discussion of these criticisms should

serve as a background to ascertaining the nature of Habermas' goals for critical theory.

Critiques aimed at the positivist methodology share the idea that positivism, by treating facts as pictures of reality independent of the knower, has circumvented the subjective constitution of the world. What has been lost is the conception of man as a knowing subject, as an active participant in the constitution of the social world. To ignore the apriori social constitution of facts, is to ignore that all sociological concepts are 'second level' constructs (Schutz); the first-level constructs being those ". . . through which social actors have already prestructured the social world prior to its scientific investigation" (T. McCarthy, In Habermas, 1979:xi).

Habermas posits this type of argument in his critique of the philosophy of science. Through an historical reconstruction of the history of positivism, Habermas wants to demonstrate that the 'knowing subject' as a system of reference has been discarded because of the replacement of ". . . epistemology by the philosophy of science" (1968:68). His reconstruction of the history of positivism voices the concern that philosophy, and the notion of a multiplicity of different theories of 'possible knowledge', has been reduced by positivists to the philosophy of science, a philosophy of scientific method.

Habermas maintains that theory construction in the empirical-analytical sciences is comprised of the formation

of ". . . hypothetico-deductive connections of propositions, which permit the deduction of lawlike hypothesis with empirical content" (1971:7). He interprets hypotheses as statements ". . . about the covariance of observable events" (1968:308). Further, empirical-analytical knowledge is possibly predictive given the statements about observable events and the establishment of a set of initial conditions. The point underpinning this discussion, however, concerns the possible prejudicing of the meaning of such predictions. Habermas says:

> In controlled observation, which often takes the form of an experiment, we generate initial conditions and measure the results of operations carried out under these conditions. Empiricism attempts to ground the objectivist illusion in observations expressed in basic statements. These observations are supposed to be reliable in providing immediate evidence without the admixture of subjectivity (1968:308).

Yet hypothetical statements about observable events can't alone depict facts. What is ignored is the subjective process of the social constitution of facts.

Habermas returns to traditional philosophy's emphasis on epistemology in order to recapture what he insists has been discarded by positivism; ". . . the constitution of the objects of possible experience" (1968:68). Positivism has restricted epistemological inquiry into the meaning of knowledge to methodology, a methodology guided by rules of theory construction. In turn, positivism's protection from attack is grounded in scientism or ". . . the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather must identify knowledge with science"

(1968:4). What is lost is reflection on the origin of meaning or, the 'theory of knowledge'. It is Habermas's aim to return to the study of the epistemological and subjective foundations of knowledge by moving away from the ontology and objectivism of positivism. This necessitates putting the experience of reflection and the knowing actor into the forefront.

By removing philosophical transcendental reflection, what the modern philosophy of science disregards is the study of the genesis of an observational language and the roots of ". . . rules for the combination of symbols" (1968:68). Habermas points out that deciding on the validity of statements is ultimately dependent on a reference to synthesis.[5]

By ignoring the knowing subject as the system of reference, positivism transgresses the transcendental basis of the objective 'world of facts'. It opts for description of universal, lawlike connections between facts and dismisses the basis of objects of analysis as they are constituted ". . . apriori in the self-evidence of our primary life-world" (1968:304). The study of the genesis of knowledge is replaced by methodological rules and the determination of the validity of statements, after the fact.

From its inception (i.e., Comte) positivism discounted metaphysics by reducing it to pre-scientific imagination. A strict separation of science and metaphysics was to be maintained in order to guarantee objectivity. Metaphysical

problems were no longer important because explanation was to be restricted to the explanation of facts. As Habermas says of Comte's analysis "He uses positive to refer to the actual in contrast to the merely imaginary . . . what can claim certainty in contrast to the undecided" (1968:74). The idea of unity in the metaphysical sense, that ". . . based on the unity and interconnectedness of being as whole" (1968:75), was displaced by a 'unity of method'.

> Science asserts the priority of method over substance only with the aid of scientific modes of procedures. The certainty of knowledge demanded by positivism thus means simultaneously the empirical certainty of sensory evidence and the methodical certainty of obligatorily unitary procedure (1968:75).

Paradoxically, while dispelling metaphysics positivism itself was caught in the metaphysical dilemma of distinguishing essence from appearance. Habermas attempts to illuminate the details of the paradoxical position of positivism by tracing the arguments of the positivists themselves (1968:74-90). After elaborating the split of the philosophy of science from the philosophical notion of knowledge, he suggests that through positivism's scientistic understanding of itself, it has come to equate all knowledge with scientific knowledge. Positivists have attempted to ground the argument for science's control over 'pure' knowledge through the delineation of the object domain of science, a domain that can be defined ". . . only by methodological rules of inquiry" (1968:80).

Habermas uses Ernst Mach's 'doctrine of elements' as an illustration of the attempt by positivists to equate reality

with the scientific object domain (1968:81-89). One of the basic goals of Mach's doctrine was to banish the metaphysical separation between 'things themselves' and their 'essence'. In order to do this the cleavage was melded and they were reduced to phenomena (1968:81).

> Mach's doctrine of elements is an attempt to explicate the world as the sum total of facts and, at the same time, the facts as the essence of reality (Habermas, 1968:81).

Mach suggests that facts have two moments ". . . the immediate power of conviction of sensations in an ego and the impingement of bodies or things independent of the ego" (1968:82). However, although facts are both given by sensation (a psychic process) and exist as bodies (physical existence), Mach posits that there is no need of a distinction since facts in both cases are composed of the same elements.[6]

Sensations, like physical characteristics, are the elements out of which reality is constituted. However, as the focal concern of Habermas's criticism suggests, if sensations are taken as elements of reality, it would then be difficulty to deny the role of consciousness. If facts are seen to lie in sensation the positivist view loses credibility since it unsuccessfully attempts to avoid the function of consciousness ". . . in whose horizon sensations are always given" (Habermas 1968:83).

> The elements of reality would be not sensations but the consciousness in which they are connected. The facts would once again have to be grounded in a construction behind the facts; in other words, they would have to be interpreted metaphysically (Habermas, 1968:83).

In order to avoid the problem of the possibility of the derivation of facts from a 'knowing ego', Habermas maintains that Mach treats the ego as a "fact among facts" (1968:84). Facts are ". . . what is known by the ego and they copy the elements of things that were independent from the ego" (Schroyer, 1975:120). The outcome of Mach's objectification of sensations into ". . . what exists in itself" (Habermas, 1968:85), is the elevation of facts to the status of essence and the consequent dismissal of subjectivity. The ego becomes merely ". . . a transitory combination of changing elements" (Habermas, 1968:85).

Although Mach's doctrine grounds science in an ontology of fact, modern positivism has rejected his solution because of its psychologistic character (ultimately Mach would maintain all cognitive activity can be reduced to empirical measurement based on the model of physics). Yet, Habermas would make the argument that Mach's central precepts have remained. Modern positivism still cannot justify reflection of itself (1968:87). The postulate of objectivism (copy theory) negates the need for reflective inquiry into the subjective constitution of reality since the distinction between the subject and the object of knowledge is thought unnecessary, given that:

> . . . reality is the totality of facts. . . . The possibility that 'facts' might be constructed in a synthesis that was not given in the fact-elements cannot be admitted by a method that holds that reality (including the mediating ego) is the totality of facts (Schoyer, 1975:120).

Modern critical positivists, although they reject the 'systematic positivism' of Comte's law of three stages, still stress the strict separation of philosophy and scientific knowledge put forward by the critical positivism of Ernst Mach. There remains a belief that ". . . philosophy is an analysis of experience, and is in no way a systematic account of the universe" (Schoyer, 1975:117). What has also been retained is the paradoxical attachment to a philosophy of history, one which ". . . sees the progress of human society tied to the advancement of science" (Schoyer, 1975:118).

What conceals this normative conception of science is the objectivistic way it is conceived. Because 'fact' is given the status of essence, it follows that objective knowledge can only be derived from its relation to the object domain of science. Science can then conceive of itself as creating facts that are unaffected by the ". . . constitutive activity of scientific praxis" (Schoyer, 1975:120), since from this point of view, scientific work ". . . is the adaptation of thoughts to facts" (Mach, quoted In Schoyer, 1975:120).

Summary

Habermas's critique of positivism proceeds by way of analysis of its foundations in ontology and objectivism. He

traces these problems to the breaking away of the philosophy of science from traditional philosophy. Based on a belief that through the neutrality of the scientific method, knowledge could be separated from interests (the constraints of inter-subjectivity), positivism replaced the theory of knowledge with methodology and the idea of science as the sole source of knowledge. Through the scientific method, the observer was guaranteed a way of insight into the objective nature of the world.

By circumventing the subjective constitution of social reality, positivism can make the claim that the metaphysical problem of distinguishing between essence and appearance had been dispelled by an objective scientific method. The copy theory of reality provided the ontology of facts. Facts, gained through the scientific method would disclose essence.

Like other anti-positivists, Habermas maintains that the supposed objectivity of positivistic social science is based on an objectivist illusion stemming from the attempted assimilation toward the method of the natural sciences. He also makes the claim that the notion of 'pure' theory in the philosophy of science is grounded in a misconstrued interpretation of classical theory.

> Theory in the sense of the classical tradition only had an impact on life because it was thought to have discovered in the cosmic order an ideal world structure, including the prototype for the order of the human world. Only as cosmology was theoria also capable of orienting human action (Habermas, 1968:306).

What has been lost is the idea of the dialectical interplay between theory and praxis. What is necessary, if the discovery of objective knowledge of this dialectic is to be acquired, is the incorporation of a historical-hermeneutic method at the metatheoretical level of theory construction. However, building this new metascience will require overcoming the objectivism that Habermas argues it too possesses.

3. Historicism: Objectivism in the Cultural Sciences

Habermas's critique of objectivism and ontology does not stop with the argument he directs toward positivism; it has instead a dual function. His aim is the illumination of the objectivisms of both science and philosophy and he uses similar criticisms to attack the notion of a presupposition-less philosophy and the determinism of historicist theories. While Habermas maintains that the integration of a subjective historical method is mandatory for dispelling the ahistorical nature of a positivist methodology, he is equally critical of inverting an unreflective philosophical stance at the metatheoretical level of inquiry.

Critical theory is posited as a solution to the problem of focussing away from the constitutive contexts and confronting the subject matter with an objectivistic posture which is the attitude emersed in positivistic science. Alternatively a critical theory also offers a solution to the problem engendered by the philosophical paradigm which takes the view that its own origin has itself, ontological primacy

(Habermas, 1974a:3). Both these problems, Habermas would maintain, have as their genesis a misconstrued notion of classical theory.

Although the cultural or hermeneutic sciences and positivism harbor dissenting conceptions of how to study man (erklaren:verstehen), they share the notion of the theoretical attitude, which they believe is derived from the classical conception of pure theory. Even though the sciences cannot be linked to classical cosmology and the search for laws of natural order, they share with positivism the belief in the ability of the observer to gain insight through the theoretical attitude.

> However much the hermeneutic sciences postulate a special access via understanding, and however little they may be concerned with the discovery of general laws, they nevertheless share with strict science a methodological awareness--of the importance of the theoretical attitude, and of describing a structured reality from a theoretical point of view. In effect nineteenth-century historicism has become the positivism of the non-natural sciences (Habermas, 1966:287).

Habermas uses Husserl's phenomenology, as it was depicted in The Crisis of the European Sciences, in order to further explicate the problem with a dependency upon the theoretical attitude. Through a critique of Husserl, Habermas is able to connect what he sees as the objectivism of both science and philosophy, or more specifically, the error in maintaining either an appeal to 'pure analysis' or 'pure transcendental reflection', based on classical theory.

Although Habermas agrees with Husserl's denial of the purported objectivity of the empirical social sciences, he

also condemns Husserl's appeal to pure theory as objectivist in itself. Husserl was concerned with what he felt was the crisis of abandoning the dictates of pure theory on the part of the empirical-analytical science. He postulated that empirical science had abandoned the Greek notion of theory and therefore, knowledge was no longer related to the practical interest of life. As a consequence, the objectivity purported by science was an illusion.

Husserl suggested that science, in taking on the attitude that ". . . the world appears objectively as a universe of facts whose lawlike connection can be grasped descriptively" (In Habermas, 1968:304), commits the error of objectivism. The underlying ". . . meaning-generative subjectivity" (In Habermas, 1968:305) is ignored. Knowledge cannot be set free from interest because this 'productive subjectivity' is covered over by the illusion of objectivity. Scientists then, do not free themselves from ". . . interests rooted in the primary life-world" (In Habermas, 1968:305).

Husserl offers his form of transcendental phenomenology as a cure for objectivist illusion in empirical science. His central focus is placed upon the re-introduction of the classical Greek notion of pure theory. Husserl would reveal the flaw in scientific objectivity by revealing the ". . . constitution of facts" (In Habermas, 1968:305) and thereby uncovering the connection between knowledge and interest within positivism. Further, he would appeal to 'pure theory' and connect it to the conduct of life. This would ideally

create the formation, among theorists, of a ". . . thoughtful and enlightened mode of life" (In Habermas, 1968:302), in the Platonic sense.

Habermas agrees with Husserl's criticism of the objectivist illusion in the sciences. Science loses 'self-reflection' by adherence to an image of a world of ". . . facts structured in a lawlike manner" (1968:305). However, Habermas maintains that Husserl is committing the same type of error by appealing to the Greek notion of theory. For rather than a representation of knowledge set free from interests, the classical notion of theory was built upon interests.

> . . . theory in the traditional sense was related to life because of its claim to having discovered the paradigm of order in Nature and man. It was only in this, its cosmological role, that Theoria had the power at the same time to orient action. But just for this reason Husserl ought not to expect educational processes to emerge from a phenomenology which has transcendentally purged the old theory of its cosmological content, and which consequently merely sticks to something like a theoretical attitude in an abstract kind of way. What was needed was not a re-alliance of knowledge with interest by an extension of the influence of theory into practical life; on the contrary, theory through the very concealment of its true interest had acquired a pseudonormative power of its own. Though criticizing the uncritical objectivism of the sciences, Husserl succumbs to another objectivism, and one which had always been latent in the traditional concept of theory (Habermas, 1966:290).

Theory in the classical sense was always associated with a cosmology. It derived pseudonormative power from the concealment of actual interest (1968:306). As a consequence of Husserl's appeal to this form of theory, although he rightly asserts the need for studying the preconditions of

the meaning of propositions that will uncover knowledge-constitutive interests, he succumbs to another objectivism. In opposition to Husserl, Habermas maintains that objectivism in science exists because it holds on to the remnants of the classical notion of theory.

> The suspicion of objectivism exists because of the ontological illusion of pure theory that the sciences still deceptively share with the philosophical tradition after casting off its practical content (Habermas, 1968:307).

Habermas's answer to the objectivisms he reveals lies in his particular formulation of a dialectical self-reflective metatheory which ultimately is to coalesce in a consensus theory of truth. Consequently, Habermas's doctrine for verifying truth claims becomes the subject of the following chapter.

NOTES

1. A most concise presentation of Habermas's argument concerning the misuses of the notion of theory is found in the appendix to Knowledge and Human Interests.

2. This process depicts what is meant by a classical unity between theory and practice "In this way theory extends over into the practical life by means of an adjustment or adaptation of the soul to the ordered movement of the cosmos: Theory imprints its form on life and, in the ethos, is reflected in the attitude of the person who subjugates himself to its discipline" (Habermas, 1966:286).

3. 'Logos' is used here in reference to pure, or theoretical truth.

4. The type of argument Habermas uses to attack the scientism invoked by the 'picture' theory of reality employed by the positivist philosophy of science is aptly summarized by Schoyer "The circularity of scientism and the denial of the constitutive activity of the subject derive from the belief that knowledge in a sense copies reality. This belief can be called the postulate of objectivism. . . . While this conception of knowledge as a 'picturing' of reality is itself the tacit epistemology of common sense, it reappeared in the philosophy of science as the assumption that the progress of knowledge improved the correspondence between facts and the world. 'Facts' therefore became the essential reality and, as such, were equivalent to an ontology. . . . The postulate of objectivism therefore negates the necessity for a reflective inquiry into the subjective conditions of possible knowledge" (T. Schoyer, 1975:120).

5. By 'synthesis', Habermas is referring to that conception used in a self-reflective philosophy. He says, "From Kant through Marx the subject of cognition was comprehended as consciousness, ego, mind, and species. Therefore the problem of the validity of statements could be decided only with reference to a synthesis, no matter how much the concept of synthesis changed with that of the subject. Explicating the meaning of the validity of judgments or propositions was possible through recourse to the genesis of conditions that are not located in the same dimension as that of the contents of the judgment or propositions" (1968:68).

6. Mach uses the example of a color (as a physical object and as a psychological object) in order to illustrate that "It is not the material that is different in the two areas, but the orientation of the investigation" (Mach, 1911:14, quoted In Habermas, 1968:82). What he attempts then is the closing of the gap between physical and psychological inquiry. Habermas suggests, however, that he is successful only at the cost of divesting 'color' of ". . . its subjective quality in both cases" (1968:82).

CHAPTER IV

SELF-REFLECTION AND THE CONSENSUS THEORY OF TRUTH

1. Interest and Knowledge

There has been a great deal of dissent over the interpretation of the role of interests in Habermas's framework (i.e., Dallmayr, 1972; Schoyer, 1971; Albert, 1974; LaCapra, 1977; Wilson, 1978; Overend, 1977) which, at least partially, stems from the ambiguity of their definition in Habermas' writings. The lack of a substantive agreement, however, necessitates a speculative inquiry which should remain accountable only to Habermas's work itself. The following argument therefore, represents an interpretation of the contingencies Habermas seems to place upon interest. This speculatory account is necessary in order to provide a framework for a later critical assessment.

Although interests are purported to underlie the production of knowledge, Habermas's early efforts depict the relationships between the 'social mediums' (work, language, and power) and interest to be an interdependent one. When he refers to interest as an invariant concept in works like Knowledge and Human Interest, he makes it clear that he means invariance only in the sense of the invariance of self-preservation as a generalized and idealized notion of what has been an historically invariant interest.[1] Yet in

Theory and Practice, Habermas seems clearly to rid the concept of interests of their ideal typical character by defining them as ". . . invariant and abstract" (1979a:9).

In Habermas's early work, the technical, practical, and emancipatory cognitive interests constitute themselves in a dialectic with the mediums of work, language, and power. For, although Habermas maintains that the three forms of information produced by the technical, practical and critical realms are guided by the respective cognitive interests, he also asserts that ". . . knowledge-constitutive interests take form in the mediums of work, language, and power" (1968:313). Knowledge produced from interests is not merely a representation of modes of survival; but interests, in turn, take shape and are molded by historical situations "What may appear as naked survival is always in its roots a historical phenomenon. For it is subject to the criterion of what a society intends for itself as the good life" (1968:313).

It appears that Habermas intends a dialectical interpretation of the relationship between knowledge and interest. However, when his notion of self-reflection is considered in light of its relationship to the uncovering of interests it is not at all clear that a dialectical interpretation is maintained.

Although interests, as they were defined in Habermas's early work, act as a guide for the production of knowledge in society, they themselves are effected by the nature of

production and types of communicative rule systems that differ among societies. This dialectical interplay between interests and historical situations appears to be the source of Habermas's use of the term 'quasi-transcendental' interests. While the interest in self-preservation remains invariant and abstract (Habermas, 1974a), cognitive interests maintain an interdependent relationship with the social environment.

Although the roots of the demise of interests as an idealized construct can be extrapolated from statements like that in Theory and Practice, where they become constants, Habermas definitely made qualifying remarks in early works. In Knowledge and Human Interests, Habermas distinguishes his from a Freudian interpretation of self-preservation. This interest remains more intricately tied to the material world than it does in Freud's model, "Freud. . . conceives the institutional framework in connection with the repression of instinctual impulses. In the system of self-preservation this repression must be universally imposed, independent of a class-specific distribution of goods and misfortune" (1968:276). In contrast, Habermas's determination of the role of the interest in self-preservation transcends the 'instinctual' connotations it carries in Freudian theory. He says:

> Even the interest in self-preservation, natural as it seems, is represented by a social system that compensates for the lack in man's organic equipment and secures his historical existence against the force of nature threatening from without. But society is not only a system of self-preservation. An enticing natural force, present in the individual as libido, has detached itself from the behavioral system of self-preservation and urges toward utopian fulfillment (1968:312).

The loss of this qualification placed upon self-preservation exemplifies the shift in Habermas's work, which will be the topic of the following chapter. As Habermas becomes more methodological in his focus, there is an increasing loss of the dialectical nature of both the categories of cognitive interest, and the distinction between work and interaction. When cognitive interests remain only 'quasi' transcendental, as in Knowledge and Human Interests, they can be interpreted as both dialectical and as ideal typical constructs which could prove useful as heuristic guides. However, it is our purpose to show that in later writings, interests become polarized constants which are used as a means for direct analysis of historical situations. These polarizations will be used to illustrate the source of what appears the objectivist dilemma in Habermas's more recent work.

In trying to overcome a relativistic notion of truth by formulating a consensus theory based on the psychoanalytic method, it would seem Habermas can now be criticised for allowing the possibility of a false objectivity in this own model. The roots of this problem stem from his humanistic

alliance to the power of self-reflection as a release for the emancipatory interest in freedom and reason.

For Habermas, "Reason also means the will to reason" 1968:314). For this stance alone he can be criticised for appealing to the humanistic notion of the possibility of realizing at some future date, a utopian community where there exists a unity between interest and freedom. However, the likelihood of creating an objectivist ontology seems to increase with Habermas's acceptance of a humanistic doctrine that incorporates ideas like: the equating of reason with the will to reason, the belief in man as basically good, the notion of ultimate truth, and an underlying universal moral order, etc. Habermas relies on the notion of self-reflection as it arose from critical philosophy, with the admixture of Freud's concept of self-preservation as an interest, as the basis for establishing the emancipatory interest as the interest of critical theory.[2] The interest in emancipation is reflected in the drive for self-preservation, and reason adheres in this interest.

However, the interest in self-preservation is not defined independent of its rootedness in the milieu of work, language, and power in Habermas's framework. What surfaces from the logical progression between the social mediums, interests, and reason, is the use of linguistic reconstruction as a method for uncovering the ideological makeup of interest. He says:

> . . . what raises us out of nature is the only thing whose nature we can know: language. Through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us. Our first sentence expresses unequivocally the intention of universal and unconstrained consensus (1968:314).

For Habermas, the emancipatory cognitive interest of a critical theory of society ". . . aims at the pursuit of reflection" (1968:314), and it is through the acquiring of self-reflective knowledge, via the critical analysis of language, that Habermas believes he can posit the thesis that ". . . in the power of self-reflection, knowledge and interest are one" (1968:314). His goal then becomes one of expanding the inherent drives of the emancipatory cognitive interest (the search for reason and freedom) into a theoretical framework of cognitive interest that will allow for the objectification of the ". . . basic orientations that are rooted in the specific fundamental conditions of the possible reproduction and self-constitution of the human species, namely work and interaction" (1968:196). The method he draws upon as a means of gaining 'objective' knowledge is based on Freud's psychoanalytic model.

2. Psychoanalysis and Objective Knowledge

Habermas believes he has found a model which incorporates all three forms of knowledge-constitutive interests in Freud's psychoanalytic method. Although he would suggest that the comprehensiveness of this model was not recognized by Freud himself, he wants to utilize it as a model that can make the transition from the analysis of the

rationalization process at the individual level, to the analysis of ideology at the level of collective action. Habermas wants to draw a parallel between repressed consciousness of the individual and false consciousness at the social level. He says:

> From every day experience we know that ideas serve often enough to furnish our actions with justifying motives in place of the real ones. What is called rationalization at this level is called ideology at the level of collective action. In both cases the manifest content of statements is falsified by consciousness' unreflected tie to interest, despite its illusion of autonomy (1968:311).

Psychoanalysis is looked upon by Habermas as a method that incorporates an emancipatory aim (the freeing of underlying rationalistic processes), with methods of both the empirical-analytic and interpretative sciences. This combination is dealt with by Freud at the individual level of analysis. He not only looked upon psychoanalysis as a natural scientific enterprise, but as a hermeneutic endeavour which proceeds as a dialogue between the therapist and patient. Knowledge gained through the reconstitution of the personal history of a patient can be used not only instrumentally, as a means of prediction and control of behavior, but also as a means of freeing formerly unconscious purposes or ends through communication between the analyst and patient.

Through the communicative process between the analyst and patient the type of self-reflection Habermas is proposing for critical theory can occur. The underlying reason that inheres in the interests of the patient can be brought to

light. As Habermas says, "Freud encounters this unity of reason and interest in the situation in which the physician's Socratic questioning can aid a sick person's self-reflection only under pathological conditions and the corresponding interest in abolishing this compulsion" (1968:287).

Habermas disagrees with Freud's interpretation of self-preservation as a direct need, independent of cultural conditions "The interest of self-preservation proceeds in accordance with the interest of reason. But the interest of self-preservation absolutely cannot be defined independently of the cultural conditions represented by work, language, and power" (1968:288). Habermas would still like to apply the psychoanalytic technique to the study of societal development however. To do so he must retain the attitude that man has an immediate interest in enlightenment, one akin to that of the patient's need for abolishing compulsion. He says ". . . for the social system too, the interest inherent in the pressure of suffering is also immediately an interest in enlightenment; and reflection is the only possible dynamic through which it realizes itself" (1968:288).

However, Habermas's analogy between the process of therapy in psychoanalysis and that of a mode of critique of society seems problematic. Although a great body of literature has accrued on this topic, some of what seem the most fundamental issues appear below.

Leaving aside the problem of psychological reduction, the domination of repressed interests a patient may overcome

is not a domination controlled by others; it is rather, a self-induced state of consciousness. There is a further problem given Habermas's notion of a pre-existing consensual system, since in psychoanalysis the patient enters therapy voluntarily, and both parties (analyst and patient) share the interest in the betterment of the patient. This emancipatory goal of psychoanalysis does not seem easily generalizable to an interest in 'enlightenment' in society. Before these issues can be dealt with further, however, it is necessary to outline Habermas's program for a 'depth-hermeneutic' method as he would apply it to social theory.

3. The Consensus Theory of Truth: Habermas's Methodological Program for Justifying Truth Claims

The central tenet of this thesis has been the claim that there is a marked distinction between Habermas's metatheoretical platform laid down in his early works and his more recent endeavors to formulate a research program for critical inquiry. The purpose of this section is to outline the methodological program Habermas has begun to construct with models like: the theory of communicative competence, the model for discursive will formation, the theory of generalizable interest, and the consensus theory of truth.

It is hoped that this outline will render comprehensible the claim that Habermas's work has lost the dialectical notions that could be attributed to his earlier formulations of the relationship between theory and practice. Our aim is

to show that by utilizing 'rational reconstruction' as a method for verifying truth claims, Habermas cannot avoid losing the 'knowing actor' as a category of knowledge production. He loses the critical concept of 'the object's preponderance over the concept', and the subjectivity embedded in historical situations, by adhering to a model that claims to provide for the justification of truth claims on the basis of a proposed equality in discourse by an 'ideal' academic community. Finally, it is hoped that this outline will provide prefatory evidence for the idea that Habermas has moved toward an idealist replacement for historical materialism by submitting to a linguistic ontology.

Habermas's attempt to construct a methodology for the justification of truth claims is presented as an alternative to the 'critical rationalism' of neo-positivists like Popper and Albert. He bases his argument on the idea that knowledge cannot progress when argumentation is locked into a process of ". . . refuting deductive arguments" (1975:107). The progress of knowledge depends instead on 'substantial' arguments, the conceptualization of which is taken from the pragmatist tradition (specifically, Pierce and Toulmin).

Substantial arguments are those governed by explanations and justifications that attempt to ". . . provide rational grounds for the recognition of validity claims" (1975a:107). In contrast to the method of the neo-positivists, Habermas suggests that substantial arguments ". . . are based on

logical inferences, but are not exhausted in deductive systems of statements" (1975a:107).

Habermas has laid down certain rules that are necessary to a model of 'rational discourse' if it is to uncover systematically distorted communication. First, discourse is distinguished as communication ". . . that is removed from the contexts of experience and action" 1975:107). Second, Habermas formulates 'universal validity claims' that must be recognized by the participants in a discourse. He says:

> The speaker must choose a comprehensible expression so that speaker and hearer can understand one another. The speaker must have the intention of communicating a true proposition (or a propositional content, the existential presuppositions of which are satisfied) so that the hearer can share the knowledge of the speaker. The speaker must want to express his intentions truthfully so that the hearer can believe the utterance of the speaker (can trust him). Finally, the speaker must choose an utterance that is right so that the hearer can accept the utterance and speaker and hearer can agree with one another in the utterance with respect to a recognized normative background (1972:2, 3).

Third, the possibility of judging problematic norms or problematic opinions to be true is dependent on the absence of constraint in communicative discourse (as opposed to ordinary interaction). Therefore, the structure of discourse must include:

> . . . that the bracketed validity claims of assertions, recommendations, or warnings are the exclusive object of discussion; that participants, themes and contributions are not restricted except with reference to the goal of testing the validity claims in questions, that no force except that of the better argument is exercised; and that, as a result, all motives except that of the cooperative search for truth are excluded (1975a:107, 108).

Finally, the justification of truth claims depends on an apriori willingness of participants to want to reach, and believe they can reach, a consensus.

These conditions, under which the notion of idealized consensus is founded, are based on various assumptions Habermas must make before operationalizing his model. These assumptions include: the participants' awareness of their intentions in making the statements they do and adhering to the norms they do, and further, that they are 'accountable' for and can justify their stances; the presupposition that a true consensus is possible; the idea that 'generalizable interests' can be accurately determined where generalizable interests are taken to mean ". . . needs that can be communicatively shared" (1975:108); the presupposition of an interest in freedom and reason and a notion of 'the good life'; and finally, an assumption of equality between participants in a discourse. The conditions under which equality would be assured are founded on those Habermas sets for the structure of communicative discourse (as previously mentioned, 1975a:107, 108).

Habermas recognizes the dilemma incurred by suggesting an 'accountability' of beliefs on the part of participants in discourse. He says, "We know that institutionalized actions do not as a rule fit this model of pure communicative action" (Habermas and Luhmann, 1971:120, quoted In Habermas, 1975a:xv).

Given the possibility of systematic distortion Habermas must supply a definition of truth that incorporates a criterion that can be used to distinguish true consensus from false consensus. Truth is defined as 'warranted assertability' (Wirklichkeit und Reflexion: Festschrif fur Walter Schulz, 1973:239-40, quoted In Habermas, 1975a:xvi). The criterion for justifying truth claims is based on the power of 'the better argument' in the pragmatic sense. If in the context of discourse, and providing it is conducted under the conditions specified for the structure of discourse, a consensus is expressed; Habermas maintains a 'rational will' necessarily governs the consensus. He suggests further, that "The discursively formed will may be called 'rational' because the formal properties of discourse and of the deliberative situation sufficiently guarantee that a consensus can arise only through appropriately interpreted generalizable interests" (1975a:108). Habermas believes he can provide rational grounds for his consensus theory and avoid the pitfalls of syntactical and semantic reconstructions with a pragmatically defined rational reconstruction of language.[3]

Via the 'communicative competence' model, Habermas wishes to construct a method for analyzing speech acts. What he is dissenting is the argument put forward in linguistics for the inapplicability of speech (as opposed to language) to formal analysis. In contrast to this view, Habermas asserts that 'utterances', the basic unit of speech can be studied

not unlike 'sentences', the basic unit of language (1979:26). For Habermas, the distinction between language and speech rests merely on the separation of linguistics from universal pragmatics, rather than on the inapplicability of speech acts to formal analysis.[4]

Consensus Theory in Practice

The central problem with an attempt at a critique of Habermas's consensus theory of truth is determining whether the 'idealized' conceptualization of a consensus over validity claims is retained in the post-1968 works. Yet it would seem that to spite Habermas' arguments to the contrary (i.e., Frankel, 1974): there can be a significant case made for the view that Habermas has endorsed a 'radical reformism' in his later works. This type of reformism and the possible political policy implications it could engender are reflected in Habermas's more recent metatheoretical works (i.e., universal pragmatics, rational reconstruction, the general theory of evolution). If this has been the case, there can also be an argument made for the idea that Habermas has given up the possibility of a dialectical approach aimed at incorporating subjectivity and has, as a result, left his work open to the criticisms of false objectivity and reliance on an ontology of man.

Habermas's adoption of 'radical reformism', can be traced to the transition in his works after 1968. This transition is most clearly reflected in works like

Legitimation Crisis, and Toward a Rational Society. A predominating claim found in these works is the notion that post-industrial societies are characterized by the subsumption of the practical realm by the technical. A systems theoretic is used as a means of depicting the unidimensionality of modern industrial societies. The problem it seems Habermas is faced with is one of justifying a 'piecemeal' social engineering approach, given the lack of conflict in the system he describes.

In order to suggest that a motivation crisis (a major theme in Legitimation Crisis), is a possibility, or that educational institutions use a rational consensus model in order to create 'policy' proposals (Toward a Rational Society), Habermas must forfeit an ideal typical notion of truth. What he is suggesting in these, his most empirical works, is that 'validity claims' could, in reality, be justified; and moreover, that they could be justified in the relative absence of objective conditions of class conflict.[5] Habermas seems to be attempting to substantiate the loss of a purely 'idealized' notion of truth through the construction of a methodology for the rational reconstruction of legitimacy claims. Yet, by maintaining that consensus can be reached in the absence of conflicting objective conditions, he appears to be transcending the incorporation of 'being' and 'time' that was a core consideration in his earlier work.

Whereas it may be reasonable to suggest that truth as an idealized notion is not effected by action or experience, when consensus ceases to be merely a heuristic tool and becomes a basis for making policy decisions, it must be grounded in historical reality. Given the absence of objective conflict in Habermas's assessment of post-industrialism, the possibility of grounding a consensus theory of truth in reality, seems wholly dependent on a transcendental emancipatory interest.

NOTES

1. Although Habermas's defining statements over the status of interests in his doctrine are ambiguous at various junctures, the appendix to Knowledge and Human Interests provides some discussion that would suggest his initial intention was to make interest an idealized construct.

2. The concept of self-preservation is abstracted from Freud with a materialist qualification taken from the Marxian interpretation. This argument is presented on p. 287 in Knowledge and Human Interest.

3. Habermas accuses empirical-analytical models of language reconstruction of being essentially models of linguistic behaviorism. They are solely directed at sensory experience of observation whereas language reconstruction is directed to understanding and ". . . the meaning of alternatives" (Habermas, 1979:9).

4. Habermas wants not to limit reconstruction to the object domain (language itself), but instead to extend analysis to speech, utterances that are abstracted from language. He says, "I would defend the thesis that not only language but speech too--that is, the employment of sentences in utterances--is accessible to formal analysis" (Habermas, 1979:6). This is his purpose in order to facilitate the goal of a universal pragmatics, that of the systematic reconstruction of ". . . the intuitive knowledge of competent subjects" (Habermas, 1979:9).

5. The 'technocracy thesis' indicates that the probability of crisis in post-industrial societies is very unlikely. Emphasis is placed on the ability of the state to manage crisis in its role as, 'steering mechanism'. By inferring the practical realm has been subsumed by the technical via the control of knowledge production, Habermas appears to have rid this thesis of the possibility of contradiction. Both A. Giddens (1978), and A. Van de Berg (1981) present succinct discussions of this problem.

CHAPTER V

OBJECTIVITY, CONSENSUS, AND EMANCIPATION

It is our purpose to illustrate that the dependency of Habermas's consensus theory of truth upon an interest in domination-free dialogue cannot free itself from the suspicion of ideological distortion, the proposition it is set out to vindicate. In order to further elucidate our contention it is necessary to more clearly articulate the guidelines Habermas has adopted for defining the relationship between knowledge and interest.

In formulating a general statement about the relationship between knowledge and human interests Habermas reduces his argument to a number of control theses, those of importance here being those concerned with an apriori interest structure and the powers of self-reflection. It is our intention to illustrate the dependence of Habermas' later works upon what he defined earlier as an independent, emancipatory cognitive interest in the evolutionary movement toward the unity of knowledge and interest. A seemingly appropriate guide for the discussion that follows would be certain key statements abstracted from the appendix to Knowledge and Human Interest.

It is Habermas's contention that three forms of possible knowledge (technical, communicative, emancipatory), ". . .

originate in the interest structure", and subsequently these "Knowledge constitutive interests take form in the mediums of work, language and power" (1968:313). Interests are thus given an apriori status. The problem of uncovering the configuration of the various interests is left to the power of self-reflection. As Habermas states:

> The human interest in autonomy and responsibility is not mere fancy, for it can be apprehended apriori. . . . In self-reflection knowledge for the sake of knowledge attains congruence with the interest in autonomy and responsibility. . . in the power of self-reflection, knowledge and interest are one (1968:314).

And it is the emancipatory cognitive interest which ". . . aims at the pursuit of reflection" (1968:314). Habermas's program for a 'new' metatheory, one aimed at the uncovering of the various interests, seems ultimately, to be grounded in a dependency on an inherent 'will to reason', or the emancipatory cognitive interest of the human species.

Habermas has attempted to show that the two divergent forms of scientific enquiry, in actuality, presuppose one another.[1] As a consequence, he proposes a merger of empirical science and the hermeneutic method in order to introduce the questioning of value rational action at the metatheoretical level of analysis. Necessarily then, Habermas is left to deal with the problem of relativism; since accepting a hermeneutic method entails the acceptance of the dialectical interplay between the observer and the object domain of the hermeneutic circle. Yet, having declared the claimed objectivity of hermeneutics to be a

false objectivity (i.e., Habermas's critique of Gadamer's recourse to tradition and authority as givens), Habermas must transcend the proposed synthesis of empirical and historicist methodologies. He must, therefore, define the conditions of objective truth.

1. Theoretical Synthesis and an Emancipatory Cognitive Interest

Habermas's purpose is the introduction of valuation into social scientific methodologies. Through the use of a process of verification through practical discourse, Habermas hopes to ground what he sets out as the distinctions between critical analysis and an objectivistic philosophy of science. He wants to prove that critical theory can overcome objectivism through 'reflection' on the origin of knowledge. Methodological questions must not solely be aimed at the ". . . rationally goal directed organization of means" (1974a:3), but must be supplemented with practical questions, ". . . posed with a view to the acceptance or rejection of norms, . . . the claims to validity of which we can support or oppose with reasons" (1974a:3). Given these goals, Habermas is left to the formulation of a model of truth which must supply a logic for his proposed justification of normative truth claims.[2]

For Habermas, the objectification process which occurs with the construction of a scientific object domain is unlike that which occurs with the socialization of an individual

only in the sense that reality is objectified based explicitly on the viewpoints, ". . . either of technical control or of intersubjective communication" (1974a:9). Thus his distinction between empirical-analytical and the historical sciences, and the interests these viewpoints express. Further ". . . these viewpoints express anthropologically deep-seated interests, which direct our knowledge" (1974a:9). Because of what Habermas sees as the loss of a self-reflective epistemology in the philosophy of science, however, there is no subsequent recognition of these underlying interests.

> . . . the sciences do not incorporate into their methodological understanding of themselves this basis of interest which serves as the apriori link between origins and the applications of their theories (1974a:9).

It is therefore Habermas's aim to develop a self-reflective methodology that has the capacity for the incorporation of uncovering its ideological origins.

Habermas has chosen a reformulated version of psychoanalysis because of its propensity for self-reflective analysis, and also because of its emphasis on merging empirical and hermeneutic methods.

> By treating psychoanalysis as an analysis of language aiming at reflection about oneself, I have sought to show how the relations of power embodied in systematically distorted communication can be attacked directly by the process of critique. . . insight can then coincide with emancipation (1974a:9).

It is at this juncture, with the positing of a psychoanalytic model as the method of a self-reflective critical theory that

Habermas's reasoning does not always appear consistent. What he seems to imply is that the interest in emancipation from distorted communication is inherent in the capacity of self-reflection. The process by which an investigator would uncover the distortions, however, relies on Habermas's consensus model of truth.

Truth, in Habermas's framework, posits itself in language; for it is in language that interests take form ". . . interests are the result of a life-form dependent on labor and language" (1974a:9). Habermas had introduced this notion in Knowledge and Human Interest.

> What raises us out of nature is the only thing whose nature we can know: language. Through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us. Our first sentence expresses unequivocally the intention of universal and unconstrained consensus (1968:314).

As a result of this stance, not only the emancipatory interest but the possibility of consensus itself is given an apriori status. The impetus for uncovering the truth that lies embedded in interest constituted knowledge comes from the emancipatory interest. The method advocated for uncovering distortion is that of self-reflection through the discursive redemption of validity claims. Yet self-reflection, in turn, seems to have two components: that of reflection of one's self, and that of a rational reconstruction of rule systems (1974a:22-23). Habermas's use of a psychoanalytic model is characterized by both these components. Communicative discourse occurs only through rational reconstruction, however, for 'reasoned

justification' cannot occur merely through self-reflection (1974a:39). Thus, discourse is not constituted by psychoanalytic dialogue alone for[3]

> . . . what is reasoned justification within the context of acts of reflection on oneself bases itself on theoretical knowledge which has been gained independently of the reflection on oneself, namely, the rational reconstruction of rule systems (1974:22).

This, then, is a general outline of the program Habermas advocates for uncovering truth. It would seem he makes an attempt to circumvent the likelihood of objectivism with his utilization of 'rational reconstruction'. However, its ties to what can be viewed as the foundations of objectivism (i.e., transcendental categories) are reinforced by Habermas's framework.

> It is only reliance upon reconstruction which permits the theoretical development of self-reflection (1974a:24). . . . Reconstructions, therefore,. . . attain an indirect relation to the emancipatory interest of knowledge, which enters directly only into the capacity for self-reflection (1974a:22).

Given the roles of emancipatory interest and reflexive explanation in Habermas, the conditions for a new metatheory cannot be satisfied by merely finding a synthesis of empirical-analytic and hermeneutic methods. His aim is the critique of distorted communication and thus, the uncovering of 'false consciousness'. The hermeneutic method cannot offer the objectification required to confirm the existence of ideological distortion. Hermeneutical analysis remains tied to the subjective constitution of the world and a relativistic understanding of history.

> In hermeneutic terms, this (false consciousness) is meaningless; consciousness cannot be false, adequate, true, or anything else--it simply is. . . it is not part of the brief of hermeneutic-historicism to enquire whether ideology or consciousness is appropriate to an objective situation (Wolff, 1975:825).

While Habermas wants to use a hermeneutic method as a means of incorporating the analysis of subjective meaning, intentions, and the normative guidelines of action, he wants to go beyond what he sees as the inability of hermeneutics to deal with the ". . . object context in which those meanings are located" (Wolff, 1975:824). On the other hand, Habermas wants to connect what he sees as the objectivistic posture of the hermeneutic view of tradition as a given (i.e., his debates with Gadamer).

> Confronted with the idealism of the hermeneutics developed for the sciences of the mind, critical sociology guards itself against reducing the meaning complexes objectified within social systems to the contents of cultural tradition. Critical of ideology, it asks what lies behind the consensus, presented as a fact, that supports the dominant tradition of the time. . . . (Habermas, In Wolff, 1975:824).

Ideology critique must simultaneously go beyond the relativism of historicism by incorporating scientific generalization and transcend its objectivism by ". . . demonstrating the factors and interest which underlie beliefs. . . (Wolff, 1975:825).

In order to create general theorems about ideological distortion, Habermas's critique of hermeneutics must presuppose the validity of the objectification techniques of the analytical theory of science. As Pilot points out,

Habermas's ". . . critique of hermeneutics presupposes the ideology-free validity of general hypotheses" (1968:460), (generality is the precondition for their testability). Alternatively, however, Habermas's critique of empirical-analytic science, ". . . presupposes the ideology-free structure of hermeneutics" (Pilot, 1968:460); since it is only through a hermeneutic method that the understanding of the intention component of action can be understood. However, an ideology-free hermeneutics would in turn be dependent upon analytical procedures for uncovering the objective constraints underlying the pre-understandings embedded in tradition.[4]

This type of circularity in the presentation of Habermas's attacks on methodologies represents what can be seen as the source of a fundamental contradiction in his model. It is at this juncture that Habermas must document the principles of a metatheory that will have the capacity to transcend the objectivisms of the methods he criticises. The problem is that he must legitimize a critical method that can objectify the constraints placed upon language as a medium of domination, without succumbing to the possibility of ideological distortion itself. As Pilot suggests:

> This contradiction in the critiques rests upon an incomplete disjunction, for the presuppositions of both critiques could differ from both procedures criticized. It would then be necessary to demonstrate ideological structures, independently of both, with the help of the emancipatory cognitive interest. But this presupposes its independent legitimation (Pilot, 1968:460).

2. The Communicative Consensus Model

To amalgamate an objective method of analyzing language, while trying to retain the rudiments of a self-reflective epistemology, Habermas turns to rational reconstruction. Although he attempts to illustrate how his particular use of reconstruction (i.e., Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence, 1970; Communication and the Evolution of Society, 1979) will offer a means of uncovering normative guidelines for action; the assumptions that he lays out in arguments like that found in Theory and Practice, appear to make his proposed program an unlikely possibility.

Rational reconstruction, as it was outlined in Theory and Practice, is the component of a self-reflective method that makes objectification of the rules that underlie pre-understanding possible. Yet, it is Habermas's contention that this occurs, 'independently', implying an independence from action and experience. It is through rational reconstruction that Habermas expresses the possibility of a method for revealing theoretical knowledge, pure knowledge somehow transcendentally acquired. It is because of this argument that Habermas's earlier claims to a dialectical, self-reflective analysis seem to be in danger.

His only recourse in justifying this claim to an access to knowledge separate from action and experience lies in the allegation that rational reconstruction has an 'indirect' link to the emancipatory interest through self-reflection, although the exact nature of this linkage has never been

clearly specified.[5] In this way an independence is given to the apriori interest in emancipation. As T. Overend points out, Habermas gives independence only to apriori interest structures and in this way his position becomes one of 'monistic fallacy'. Habermas is claiming ". . . that the recognition of the aposterior subject-object relation is dependent upon the apriori interest structure. . . ." (Overend, 1977:123).

Overend goes on to make the further allegation that by embedding knowledge in an apriori interest structure, Habermas's method of self-reflective analysis leads to an infinite regress of interest structures.

> . . . if we are to have knowledge of such an apriori interest structure it must itself be the object term of a subject-object relation. But, if this is the case, the recognition of such a relation is dependent upon another prior apriori interest structure, while this interest structure if it is to have 'object' status is, in turn, dependent upon another prior interest structure (Overend, 1977:123).

It would follow from this argument that in order to determine an objective meaning for any particular case, Habermas has to grant independence to some aposteriori relation between knowledge and interest. This appears to be the role of language in his system. He gives to language an ontological primacy which, in itself, seems to constitute a contravening of his original goals. At the same time he also separates language from action and experience.

Through the method of rational reconstruction meaning is somehow transcendentally gleaned through the objectification of language. The upshot is that Habermas has severed the

amalgamation of 'pure' and 'practical' reason even though his initial goal had been to find a synthesis. Although these seem the logical outcomes of Habermas' formulations, the lack of explicit detailing makes a precise critique impossible. For instance:

> . . . the claim that language and meaning are in someway ontologically distinct, and that, ipso facto, one can separate language from meaning is clearly false. Yet Habermas' doctrine of monism leads him to such distinctions, as relation r (hence language) is independent, while relation R (hence meaning) is dependent in status (Overend, 1977:124).

Given the obscurity and lack of specificity in Habermas's work, it becomes necessary to sift through some of the more relevant criticisms which have accumulated over the possible false objectivity in Habermas.

One way of approaching the multiplicity of critical comments that Habermas' writings have engendered is to turn to those concerns voiced by K. O. Apel. Although their works are closely aligned, the differences that can be elaborated illustrate most compellingly that the genesis of objectivism (if indeed it does exist in Habermas) springs from his postulate over the convergence of knowledge and emancipatory interest or, reason and the 'will' to be rational.

Habermas's reliance on the postulate of autonomy and responsibility and their convergence with an emancipatory interest may not only suggest a questionable logic, but it also creates the suspicion of a 'social engineering' approach to practical questions. Apel has suggested Habermas has narrowed the relationship between knowledge and interest to

an extreme. Apel himself advocates a greater separation between 'reflection', and political involvement. He says ". . . the assumption that such emancipation has immediate political repercussions is an 'idealistic illusion'. . . . (Apel, In F. Dallmayr, 1972:219), in his comments concerning the alleged coincidence of reason and emancipation at the highest level of philosophical enquiry.

The apriorism of Habermas's program is attacked for its possible political implications. For instance, in contrast to what lies implicit in Habermas, Apel asserts that political participation necessarily exposes the individual to the ". . . ambiguities of concrete situations and lacks the comfort of apriori certitude" (Apel, in F. Dallmayr, 1971:220). Apels' criticisms appear well founded if Habermas' goals for the application of his consensus model of truth to the realm of social action are taken as an accurate depiction of the general direction his stance leads.

Habermas has laid out the rudimentary design of his consensus model in A Theory of Communicative Competence. In closing statements of the article he outlines how the model may be applied in social analysis. He makes it clear that his notion of an ideal speech situation does not preclude an 'idealized' conceptualization of consensus; but rather that ideal speech conditions are contingent upon 'empirical limitations'.

In defining his use of 'idealization' in an ideal speech situation, he makes the assumption that ". . . we imagine the actual motivations of the actor being identical with the linguistically apprehensible intentions of the speaker" (1970:373). This assumption is based on the understanding of motivations as the basis of all action and further, of language as the medium in which all motivation is organized. Thus, for Habermas the 'ideal' speech situation does not presuppose an ideal conceptualization of consensus in, for instance, the Weberian sense.

For Habermas, the ideal speech situation is not merely a theoretical abstraction but can occur in reality. However, Habermas is not making the assumption that all actions are ". . . controlled by motives which coincide with the intentions of the actor-speaker" (1970:373). Although he posits his method as a means of gaining access to subjective meaning, he does not suggest all motives can be immediately known. Instead, he suggests that to some degree motives are ". . . excluded from public communication and fixed to a pre-linguistic symbol organization . . . ." (19770:373). What follows from this statement elucidates the connection Habermas wishes to draw between the production of knowledge and underlying interests. And it is this posture that Apel criticizes for its potential as an 'idealist illusion'.

What Habermas postulates is a direct linkage between the production of knowledge and the interest in political control.

> The greater the share of pre-linguistically fixed motivations which cannot be freely converted in public communication, the greater the deviance from the model of pure communicative action. . . these deviations increase in proportion to the degree of repression which characterizes the institutional system within a given society. . . the degree of repression depends in turn on the developmental stage of the productive forces and on the organization of authority (1970:374).

This statement carries several implications. First, it suggests an almost 'intentional' relationship between the interest in technical exploitability by those in power, and the subversion of what is not 'publically communicated'. Second, it implies the need for a linguistic reconstruction of underlying, or hidden, motives; since Habermas makes the assumption that ". . . the motivational base of all action is organized linguistically. . . ." (1970:373). Third, by maintaining that motives kept from public communication are the result of repression by the political institution of a society, Habermas is suggesting the existence of false consciousness. This carries the subsequent implication of the need for a 'freeing' from the restraints of the ideological distortions of a repressive political structure through 'communicative competence'.

Finally, the earlier portion of his paper was devoted to an elaboration of a method that could be used as a vehicle for uncovering the distorted or repressed communication this statement alludes to. Habermas uses Chomsky's account of 'linguistic competence' and adds to it his own formulation of communicative competence or, ". . . the basic qualification of speech and symbolic interaction (role-behavior on the part

of the participant, in defining what) . . . mastery of an ideal speech situation" (1970:367) would encompass. A communicative competence on the part of participants in an ideal speech situation must therefore, be presupposed. The aim of discourse at this level is the uncovering of categories of motives or views of life, that are based on distributions of what Habermas terms, 'dialogue-constitutive universals'.[6]

FIGURE II

Semantic Universals

	apriori	aposteriori
intersubjective	dialogue-constitutive universal	cultural universal
monological	universal cognitive schemes of interpretation	universals of perceptive and motivational constitution

(Habermas, 1970:364)

It is with the aid of dialogue-constitutive universals that Habermas hopes to devise an avenue for uncovering distortions in communication. He suggests "It should be possible to demonstrate the deformations of pure intersubjectivity, induced by the social structure, on the basis of asymmetries in the performance of dialogue rules. The uneven distribution of dialogue-constitutive universals in standard communication between individuals and social groups indicates the particular form and deformation of the

intersubjectivity of mutual understanding which is built into the social structure" (1970:372). Ultimately, Habermas sees the possibility of a general semantics evolving from the theory of communicative competence based on the possibility of a categorical framework of potential views of life being constructed from distributions of dialogue-constitutive universals.

By tying the relationship between knowledge and interest to the institutional structure via the degree to which 'motives' are repressed, ultimately Habermas is left with the necessity of showing the existence of 'constraints' upon pure communication. He must show how his particular method of rational reconstruction can overcome the reductionism of other systems for reconstructing language universals (i.e., given his critique of correspondence or pictures theories of truth in the empirical philosophy of science). For it is at this point that Habermas must show how a dialectical interplay between an objectified scientific language of explanation and the interpretation of practical, historical reality can occur.

In the following chapter it is our purpose to attempt to establish the dependency, in the final analysis, of Habermas's model for communicative competence upon the independent legitimation of the emancipatory cognitive interest. The argument will focus on Habermas's 'technocracy thesis' in an attempt to explain why, in the absence of a substantial indication by Habermas of the existence of

constraints in post-industrial societies, he must rely on the assumption that there is an evolutionary movement toward emancipation. An assumption that appears to have no materialist counterpart, and which as a result, can be attacked as idealism.

NOTES

1. This is the argument he sets out in the article, "Rationalism Divided in Two", In A. Giddens (Ed.), Positivism and Sociology, 1974.

2. In order to illustrate the roots of Habermas's argument, the following discussion will rely on excerpts from Theory and Practice.

3. This appears to be an attempt to overcome the various criticisms levelled at the psychoanalytic model as a model for the social sciences (i.e., inequality between analyst and patient, psychologism, underlying consensus, willing submission on the part of the patient).

4. Habermas would maintain that the acceptance of tradition as 'given', by hermeneutics makes it incapable of incorporating an analysis of the 'natural constraints' (Pilot, 1968), place upon language as a medium of domination and power.

5. The role of aposteriori reconstructed meaning remains a highly controversial issue in regard to Habermas' actual intentions. (The matter is succinctly addressed by T. Overend, 1977, 1978).

6. The concept of dialogue-constitutive universals and the table that follows require further explication. Habermas explains: "Some meanings are apriori universal in as much as they establish the conditions of potential communication and general schemes of interpretation; others are aposteriori universal, in the sense that they represent invariant features of contingent scopes of experience which, however, are common to all cultures. For that reason we differentiate between semantic universals which process experiences and semantic universals which make this processing possible in the first place (i.e., aposteriori, apriori). Furthermore, some meanings are intersubjectively universal in the sense that they are fixed in structures which first develop with the cultural level of linguistic communication itself; other meanings are monologically universal in as much as they refer to structures of the solitary human organism prior to all communication. Therefore we differentiate between semantic universals which precede all socialization and semantic universals which are linked to the condition of potential socialization (monological/intersubjective). The combination of these points of view comprise four classes of semantic universals (1970:363).

CHAPTER VI

TECHNOCRACY AND THE EMANCIPATORY INTEREST

With the formulation of a 'technocracy thesis' Habermas turns to the problem of constructing a 'practical philosophy of history'. To get at the apriori structuring of the normative order, and to thus 'uncover' the motives for action that have heretofore been covered over by a scientistic ideology, Habermas must develop a method capable of establishing the material contradictions a technocratic ideology leaves in its wake.

In order to avoid decisionistic and determinist pitfalls, Habermas wants to utilize a dialectical method that has the capacity to interpret the value implications of scientific theories and simultaneously, avoid falling prey to dialectical utopianism. In other words, he requires a method that can come between science and transcendental philosophies. As a consequence, he proposes a method of 'contingent dialectics'; a method which he maintains ". . . is not an apriori principle of thought, it does not take place prior to and underlying all history" (1974a:321).

Instead, a contingent dialectics arises from the actual contradictions that inhere within the structure of domination of a society itself. A contingent dialectic ". . . is as contingent as the dominating conditions of labour whose inner contradiction and outer movement it expresses" (Habermas,

1974a:319). The dialectic itself represents the contradictions which exist in an ideologically distorted society and the relationships between individuals in that society. It is therefore, not a method, but instead must be expressed through dialogue, a critical dialogue behind which lies the interest in emancipation from domination. Dialectics must then be ". . . understood from within the dialogue; certainly not itself as dialogue but as a consequence of repression" (Habermas, 1974a:318).

By turning against distortion, a critical dialogue also turns dialectics against itself since it is in dialectics that repression is expressed. A critical dialogue will expose the constraints which exist upon freedom and at the same time transcend dialectics "Dialectics fulfilled in practice is simultaneously transcended dialectics" (Habermas, 1974:319). This procedure, theoretically, would perform the dual goals of exposing constraints on human action and as a result, free thought from ideological distortion. At this point Habermas would suggest a transcended dialectics represents the culmination of what is its original intention or ". . . a domination-free dialogue which could be universally practised" (1974:314). This statement is illustrative of Habermas's reliance on an apriori interest in emancipation to the development of a critical dialogue.

In order to fulfill the goals of 'contingent dialectics', Habermas must demonstrate two things. First, he must be able to empirically verify the existence of

'constraints' and the 'actual' contradictions they emerge from. Second, he must somehow produce an independent legitimation for an apriori interest in domination-free dialogue. If he cannot satisfy these two conditions, it would seem his program becomes one of a 'dialectics of utopian reason'.[1] A discussion of the problems engendered by the first condition will be left to the section that follows. We will, however, briefly deal here with the logical consistency of legitimating an apriori interest in emancipation in terms of Habermas's 'practical' philosophy of history.

Given Habermas's total framework, it would seem emancipation would occur through the emancipation of 'language' from distortion. His philosophy of history is grounded in a principle where ". . . the unity of knowledge and interest proves itself in a dialectic that takes the historical traces of suppressed dialogue and reconstructs what has been suppressed" (Habermas, 1968:315). Yet language is also seen as a 'form of life' in Habermas's system, a medium through which society is created. It would seem therefore, language is inexorably bound up in ideological distortion itself. How then is it possible for language not to present an ideologically distorted view of emancipation? And how is it that the 'idea' of emancipation does not succumb to distortion?

The only recourse would prove itself in having an apriori knowledge of 'true' emancipation. Yet this would

seem to destroy Habermas's platform for a 'contingent' dialectics. It would demand that the observer have a knowledge of the future (emancipated society); and if this knowledge can be apprehended apriori in the interest in emancipation, it would demand that the dialectic of the interest in emancipation be apprehended apriori. This then is no longer a 'contingent dialectics', situating itself in present conditions, but a dialectics of utopian reason. As Pilot argues, given that the interest in emancipation ". . . is structured dialectically, yet nevertheless can be apprehended apriori, then its dialectic too must be posited apriori. . . ." (1968:467).

This argument is based on the notion that cognitive interests have a dialectical relationship to the production of knowledge; yet it is never entirely clear whether cognitive interests maintain their dialectical status or not in Habermas's various definitional statements. As one author points out:

> . . . the status of cognitive interests, their relationship to one another, and their relation to the ideal speech situation, which appears as the epitome of the emancipatory interest, are problematic. And Habermas is divided between a dominant self-understanding in terms of clear and distinct cognitive interest with an apriori or quasi-transcendental status and a submerged intimation of overlapping, supplementary relationships which place his own categorial determinations in question. The emancipatory interest seems at times to be beyond the technical and practical and other times it seems to refer to the overlapping supplementary relation between them. . . . (LaCapra, 1977:256-258).

However, even given the rather cloudy status of cognitive interests, it does appear possible to discern a definite trend in Habermas's work toward the dichotomization of interests, and a resulting polarization of the concepts of 'work' and 'interaction', or alternatively, the technical and practical realms of action. It is the problems that this split has engendered that will be dealt with in the following section.

1. The Technocracy Thesis: Constraints and Constants

Habermas's position toward defining the status of cognitive interests appears to oscillate between a negative-dialectical perspective (i.e., "basic orientations rooted in specific fundamental conditions of the possible reproduction and self-constitution of the human species. . ." (1968:196)), an attitude where they are defined as inter-dependent and quasi-transcendental; and the implication that they are transcendental, objective categories. However, his goals for a new metatheory and the subsequent emphasis on the justification of truth claims leave interests as ahistorical, transcendental constants, with the consequent demise of their dialectical status.

Along with Habermas's critique of the objectivisms of empirical-analytical and historical sciences came a strict separation between the interests he sees to underlie the information generated. Yet, the solution he offers, a self-reflective critique of ideology, appears to be wholly

dependent on an 'emancipatory' interest on the part of the observer. By making critical enquiry dependent on an apriori emancipatory interest, Habermas transcends the conditions of a materialist critique. The apriorism of the interest structure removes interests from their constitution in the social world. They become ahistorical categories and by doing so, lose their relationship to the object domain. Habermas goes beyond the claims of a critical rationalism aimed at functional correctness, or falsification; instead he claims the interest in emancipation will be a lever for actually finding the underlying truths of 'distorted' communication.

Because of the suggestion that interests underlie the production of knowledge, Habermas must transcend the methodological rules of the critical rationalism of the neo-positivists. He ignores the fact that the 'underdeterminancy' principle is now commonly accepted in the philosophy of science (Hesse, 1978). He also ignores the allowances made in current positivistic theory for value-relevance and the importance of normative constraints placed upon researchers by the objective world. As even Popper admits ". . . what is usually called scientific objectivity is based to some extent, on social institutions" (1957:155).

By depicting all knowledge as interest constituted and by polarizing technical and practical interests, Habermas should not be able to make concessions to a critical rationalism directed at 'success' or 'functional correctness'

criteria of consensus. He must instead rely on an alternative mode of justifying normative truth claims through 'rationally reconstructing' hidden motives. In the final analysis however, Habermas cannot overcome the objectivism of what he overemphasized as the positivistic claim to value-neutrality, without submitting his own doctrine to the dangers of objectivism itself. Ironically, Habermas's post-1968 writing (specifically, Legitimation Crisis), has itself become infused with a systems-theoretic; a change largely due to his adoption of 'radical reformism' via 'piecemeal social-engineering'. Unable to empirically demonstrate the existence of objective conditions of 'constraint' in post-industrial systems, Habermas's technocracy stance usurps his claim to a self-reflective epistemology. As one critic puts it:

> Habermas' switch was the shift from negative dialectics and the objects preponderance to a more 'positive' attitude featuring grasp strategy, and an explicit theoretical endorsement of piecemeal social engineering. . . . To be sure, a new faith in the possibility of a contrived universal recognition premissed upon the demonstration of 'communicative competence', even within the reality of an unfinished and exploitative social reality, informs his post-1968 vision of social change through open dialogue (Wilson, 1978:190).

Ultimately, the search for 'reason' then ceases to be problematic, it becomes an analytical, ahistorical given, in the communicative consensus model.

Habermas, by applying a typology of dichotomous, polar opposites (work and interaction) directly to the analysis of history and society (LaCapra, 1977), has jettisoned not only

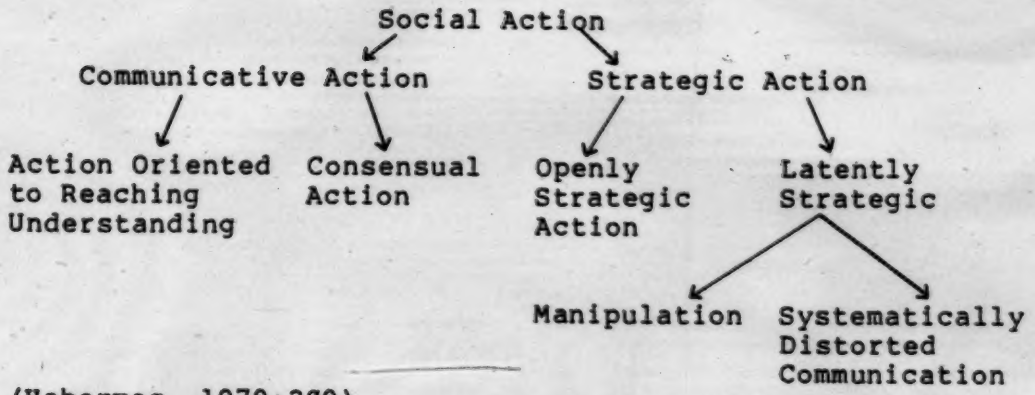
the dialectical notion of the object's preponderance over the thing conceived by positing an identity theory through language, but he also falls prey to the problems of determinism. The linguistic ontology which characterizes his later works forces him into the same historicist dilemmas he had so avidly criticized.

Anthropological Constants and the Technical/Practical Dichotomy

The division Habermas draws between technical and practical cognitive interests has burgeoned over into his methodological writings on post-industrialism. The result has been a polarization of all the various concepts he uses in his Parsonian-like depiction of social action. The following figure, an outcome of Habermas's discussions of Universal Pragmatics, illustrates his dichotomization techniques. Although formulated as 'idealized' cases, it is difficult to envision how the concepts contained in these kinds of typologies can overcome the criticism of an arbitrary decisionism, given Habermas's communicative consensus model.

FIGURE III

The Derivative of Social Action



(Habermas, 1979:209)

The dichotomies Habermas constructs are ultimately reducible to the distinction between labor and interaction (the technical and practical realms) and the interests which constitute them. The central thesis which emerges from the dichotomy between technical/practical is Habermas's 'technocracy thesis'. The thesis is premissed on the idea that the practical realm has been subsumed by the technical, or at least to the degree where there are no measurable signs of coming crises over the contradictions of late-capitalist societies. The repercussions of this type of social theory point to the complete dependency of political decisions upon technico-scientific ones.

The thesis essentially implies the futility of applying a Marxian class analysis to western societies since it reveals the lack of evidence for determinable 'class interests'. In effect, what Habermas is arguing is that Marx's labour theory of value can no longer be utilized since

science and technology have become the pre-eminent productive force and as a consequence ". . . men have lost a consciousness of the dualism of work and interaction" (Habermas, 1971:105). Classes are no longer identifiable groups because of the ability of state-regulated capitalism to avoid economic crisis and, simultaneously, protect the interest of the capitalist power structure. The role of the state as a 'steering mechanism' is central to Habermas's portrayal of late-capitalism. He says:

> . . . in state regulated capitalism, the political system has incorporated an interest which transcends latent class boundaries in preserving the compensatory distribution facade (1971:109).

In other words, Habermas is lamenting the virtual hegemony of a false, technocratic consciousness. The onus of this pervasive false consciousness is singled out as the reification of science in socio-cultural life. As the ideological nucleus of the 'new' consciousness this results in ". . . the elimination of the distinction between the practical and technical" (Habermas, 1971:113). Habermas's only recourse in the construction of an analytical model has been what, for all intents and purposes, seems the creation of just another determinist model of history.

Habermas seems to have reverted to the use of the very notions he so adamantly opposed in his early works, by implying that ". . . the organization of human nature will not change anymore. . . . (Lepenies, 1971:220), since the technocratic ideology has subsumed the interest in domination-free communication. This position seems clarified

by his statement that ". . . men have lost a consciousness of the dualism of work and interaction. . . . " (1971:105). The result of this stance can be seen in the increasing recourse by Habermas, to the use of anthropological, ahistorical categories. As early as 1971, he suggested the ". . . technocratic consciousness will sacrifice this practical interest to the expansion of our power of technical control. Thus the reflection which this new ideology calls for must penetrate beyond the level of particular historical class interests to disclose the fundamental interests of mankind . . . ." (1971:91).

By removing interests from cultural or historical contexts, Habermas breaks away from the guidelines he had once imposed. He can show no objective indicators of constraints implying the contradiction-ladeness of society, and further, he is forced to justify the concept of emancipatory interest solely on the grounds of an anthropology of 'reason'. All this runs in direct contrast to his original attacks on the use of anthropological constants in social theorizing. As Lepenies argues, "Habermas criticized attempts at 'cataloguing' anthropological constants, by stating that a science which clung to such constants would become uncritical, and would finally lead up to a dogmatism with political implications, a danger that was so much the greater since it would claim the objectiveness of science" (1971:214).

2. Transcending 'Technocracy'

Habermas' more recent works, those dedicated to the disclosure of a research program (the theories of: communication--a universal pragmatics, socialization--acquisition of communicative competence, and evolution--reconstruction of historical materialism (1979), can be interpreted as a further movement toward an idealist reconstruction of social action and a deterministic model of the 'evolution' of reason. As was pointed out in earlier discussions, Habermas's communicative competence model suffers from the dilemma of the apriorisms of consensus and emancipation. As a consequence, there seems no substantial indication, in the works reviewed, that his doctrine for a universal pragmatics does not reduce to a humanistic ontology of man; one grounded only in the belief in an inherent 'will to be rational'.

Although it is not our purpose to provide detailed descriptions of the 'socialization' and 'evolution' theories since they are presented as preliminary, heuristic guides (Habermas, 1979:205), there appears some evidence to support the allegation that these theories may only increase the movement toward ontology and objectivism. The basic goal of Habermas's formulation of rational reconstruction in 'universal pragmatics', is to use it as a means for assessing the 'logic' of development in terms of both the theory of socialization and that of evolution. Habermas's reconstructive method for justifying truth claims aims at a

merger of hermeneutics, analytic language philosophy (Rawls, Lorenzen, Apel), and cognitive developmental psychology, in an attempt to construct a theory ". . . structurally clarifies the historically observable sequence of different levels of justification and reconstructs it as a developmental-logical nexus" (Habermas, 1979:205). He turns to Piaget's cognitive development psychology as a possible method for overcoming the split between 'formal' and 'empirical' analysis in the reconstruction of language.

Habermas maintains the theory introduced by Piaget has led:

> to a type of research determined by a peculiar connection between formal and empirical analysis, rather than by their classical separation. The expression 'transcendental', with which we associate a contrast to empirical science, is thus unsuited to characterizing, without misunderstanding, a line of research such as universal pragmatics (1979:24).

The specifics of the use Habermas intends for this particular form of paradigm is left in this rather vague state, along side the equally vague conclusion that ". . . behind the terminological question, there stands the systematic question concerning the as-yet insufficiently clarified status of nominological empirical sciences of the reconstructive type" (1979:25).

It seems reasonable, however, to interpret universal pragmatics as the basis for justifying the potential use of universal validity claims for interpreting the 'progress' of knowledge. In an attempt to circumvent the dogmatism of classical metaphysics (i.e., ontology, natural psychology,

cosmology, etc.) in his formulation of the history of the species, Habermas wants to present ". . . a weaker version, which is not open to familiar criticisms of the objectivism of philosophy of history" (1979:139).

Habermas wants to avoid the pitfalls of demanding, of history, a unilinearity, necessity, or irreversibility, by separating ". . . the dynamics of development. . . (development of structures). . . from the process through which the empirical substrates develop" (1979:140). Yet the substitute he offers assumes there is a rational, reconstructable logic to the development of social structures, one that Habermas implies can possibly be uncovered through the inversion of a model of cognitive development. He argues:

> The history of technology is probably connected with the great evolutionary advances of society through the evolution of world views; and this development might, in turn be explicable through formal structures of thought for which cognitive psychology has provided a well-examined ontogenetic model, a model that enables us to place these structures in a developmental-logical order (1979:148).

To avoid delving into the intricacies of what is yet an unfinished methodological program, a quotation from Habermas's article, "On Social Identity", may supply a sufficient indication of the general trend his program is taking. The article documents Habermas's version of the gemeinschaft/gesellschaft-like distinction between traditional and modern societies, and the relationship of the individual to the respective social institutions.[3]

Using the terminology of cognitive psychology, Habermas documents the transition from tribal societies, characterized by a unity between the individual 'ego' and the group: transitional societies, characterized by 'easily' legitimized institutions (i.e., Habermas cites periods during which 'universal religions arose'); and modern societies, characterized by an 'alienated I' (1974c:91-95).

In his concluding statements, Habermas elucidates what seem definite indicators of the determinism embedded in his model, ones stemming from the inability to produce objective conditions of constraint. In his description of the modern, 'rational' identity he argues,

> The new identity of an as yet emergent global society cannot find articulation in world images, although it must, of course, presuppose the validity of universalistic moral systems. The latter, however, can be linked with the basic norms of rational discourse. This in itself is a step in the direction of a collective type of identity which, as I have indicated, is grounded in the consciousness of universal and equal opportunity to participate in value and norm-forming learning processes (1974c:100).

Viewed more generally, Habermas' recent works seem to be moving toward a slightly different approach to grounding the connection between interest and reason. This is particularly evident in his adoption of Piaget's development psychology. What is new, is the concept of ego development which appears to have been superimposed upon Habermas's notion of the historical development of the technical and practical realms. As one author argues, ". . . he now seems to be arguing that the human species undergoes a very slow learning process

(interdependent with the development of productive forces) of successively higher levels of moral-practical consciousness . . . with norms and values becoming ever more universalistic" (van den Berg, 1980:474).

However, the dilemmas Habermas faces do not seem to have changed. The problem of producing objective proof of the 'universalization' of values merely replaces its counterpart of elucidating contradictions in late-capitalism. Ultimately Habermas appears to offer no real alternative to the problems engendered in the works of the early Frankfurt theorists; for in the final analysis his propositions reduce to the humanistic belief in the 'good-life' and its coincidence with reason.

Habermas seems to have found no way out of the dilemma which has traditionally plagued humanistic philosophies which declare their belief in the inevitable unity between freedom and reason. There seems no defensible evidence of a discovery of a means of transcending the probable objectivism of an apriori interest structure. Ultimately, this may stem from a fundamental contradiction in the humanist doctrine itself. The belief in the eventual unification of freedom and reason, as Joseph Schumpeter demonstrated, ". . . is inherently contradictory: if there is such a thing as apriori reason, men cannot be truly free to choose; if men are to be truly free to choose, they must also be able to choose unreason" (1950, pp. 235-68, In van den Berg, 1980:453).

NOTES

1. This argument follows one put forward by Pilot (1968:442-469).

2. Habermas's reconstructive method for justifying truth claims aims at a merger of hermeneutics, analytic language philosophy (Rawls, Lorenzen, Apel), and cognitive developmental psychology, in an attempt to construct a theory ". . . that structurally clarifies the historically observable sequence of different levels of justification and reconstructs it as a developmental-logical nexus" (Habermas, 1979:205).

3. The title Habermas chooses illustrates the connection he wants to make with developmental psychology--Stages of Ego and Group Identity.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. Summary and Conclusion

This thesis can be summarized as an attempt to elucidate the genesis and type of objectivism that has arisen in Habermas' doctrines for a critical social theory. Although we have sought to show a basic agreement with Habermas' goals for a 'complementarity' model in the philosophy of science, we also hoped to uncover the sources for the incompatibility between his consensus model and the incorporation of categories of subjectively constituted meaning. Not only have we found it questionable as to how metatheoretical issues could be addressed by Habermas (i.e., the influence of presupposition, object choice, boundary decisions, etc.) at the level of theory construction, but the concept of the dialectical relationship between the subjective and objective realms appears to have been forfeited.

Reflection, conceived as it is in Habermas's framework, removes itself from real conditions. Reflection becomes a reflection carried on in a realm of 'knowing' observers who somehow have the power to transcend normative constraints and decide the true nature of the distortion (or domination) residing in language. Although much of Habermas's early work was devoted to explication of the dialectical and contingent relationships among interest, knowledge, and action; the

roots of an objectivistic use of language reconstruction, via his belief in an actual, historical evolution of non-repressive communication, could also be detected.

In 1968 Habermas plainly articulated the need to overcome the pseudonormative role science had taken for itself by defining scientific knowledge as prototypical.

> Modern methodology, too, gains pseudonormative force by first taking a particular category of traditional knowledge as the prototype of science. It then generalizes the procedures that make possible the reconstruction of this knowledge and converts them into a definition of science (1968:14).

The aim of critical theory became that of overcoming the objectivist posture of a philosophy of science that makes the claim of value neutrality, one based on a belief that an access to 'pure' knowledge occurs via the rules of scientific method.

It was through the use of a dialectically conceived, self-reflective methodology that Habermas hoped to overcome objectivism. Thus, interests were not always represented as merely apriori determinants of action.

> The interest in the preservation of life is rooted in life organized through knowledge and action. Thus knowledge-constitutive interests are determined by both factors. On the one hand, they attest to the fact that cognitive processes arise from life structures and function within them. On the other hand, however, they also signify that the form of socially reproduced life cannot be characterized without recourse to the specific connection of knowing and action. . . . (Habermas, 1968:211-212).

Yet, it is also in Knowledge and Human Interests that Habermas outlines the framework that makes language a metainstitution, one in which domination can be uncovered

". . . through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us" (1968:314). We have attempted to illustrate that Habermas's particular platform for language reconstruction, combined with his belief in the emancipatory interest as the power behind an ". . . evolution toward autonomy and responsibility" (1968:315), have been the major factors behind what we have tried to substantiate as a pervasive idealist illusion in his doctrines.

In attempting to formulate a postscript to an analysis of Habermas, it is necessary to present some conjectures about the probable implications of his more current efforts. It would seem Habermas is now working on the theoretical merger of a cognitive development psychology and systems theory with what was the focus of his earlier writings, or a type of phenomenological Marxism.[1] In short, what appears to be occurring is the superimposition of a linguistic onology upon Habermas' early interests in a social theory designed to infiltrate the subjective constitution of meaning. Our purpose has been to attempt to bring out the dilemmas engendered by Habermas's rather complex merger of various philosophical and methodological traditions and to try to substantiate what we propose are the repercussions of his stance, based on certain logical contradictions inherent in his assumptions. In order to summarize this critique, we would like to propose that it is Habermas' humanist leanings which have been the most salient factor behind the contradictions in his work.

From his humanist vantage point, the idea that either the human sciences and/or interactions among individuals are guided to some extent by an instrumental motivation is unacceptable to Habermas. Unfortunately, the humanist attachment to the potentially 'conscious' actor and the corresponding aversion to constraints placed upon freedom by unequal social structures, seems the underlying determinate to what is evidenced as the idealism of Habermas's doctrine. For example, even without the benefit of substantive proof, and in fact his work indicates the opposite, Habermas still maintains that the 'fundamental contradictions' of post-industrialism persist. The burden of proof therefore, is left to the idealist conjecture that there exists an apriori interest structure which can be defined independently in terms of ahistorical constants.

Habermas's original plan for establishing a reformulated Marxist social theory, one having the capacity to integrate practical reason, would seem to have become nothing more than a re-cloaking of the old dilemmas faced by other humanist doctrines. In other words, Habermas seems to offer no new evidence for a way out of the fact/value dilemma.

Exactly how the analysis of values can be incorporated at the metatheoretical level, without leaving a methodology unguarded prey for objectivism is still a query that can be legitimately directed at his work. By attempting to avoid the relativism of the hermeneutic circle Habermas has increasingly moved toward the adoption of a model for

uncovering 'universal truths'. For Habermas, truth cannot be found in the authority of tradition as he claims is the belief that creates an objectivist distortion in hermeneutic methodologies; nor is it found in the 'knowing-ego' of any Husserlian-like phenomenology. Instead, for Habermas, truth lies in an apriori consensus found in language itself. Yet, as has been indicated by discussion surrounding the Habermas/Gadamer debate, the role language is designated in Habermas' formulations remains problematic.

For instance,

> Habermas concedes that language can be described as functioning in the manner of a metainstitution, one on which all societal institutions are dependent . . . . However, Habermas also sees that language as the context of tradition revealed in speech must also be seen as dependent on societal processes which do not manifest themselves completely in language. . . . (Misgeld, 1978:181). [I.e., labour and domination].

How the observer transcends tradition to uncover distorted communication given this dialectical interplay between language, labour and domination is a question that forces Habermas into a potentially objectivist position.

If Habermas wants to assume there are no 'privileged knowers', as was clearly his intention in the critiques aimed at transcendental phenomenologies, then how the observer becomes 'free of tradition' to perform critique remains problematic. What seems to follow from this is the fact that Habermas's consensus model remains dependent upon privileged acquisition of knowledge, which is also the conclusion drawn by those who have criticized his radical reformist stance.

It is Habermas's post-1968 reformist stance that most clearly articulates the problems arising from his humanistic assumptions. While committed to the practical aim of political involvement, Habermas's liberalism leads him to the same type of dilemma the empiricist faces. The dialectical interplay of a democracy, when conceived in the practical sense, occurs because the political realm deals with 'present' conditions. However, the 'formal' democracy Habermas envisions removes itself from the practical realm because it becomes dependent on a type of reflection that assumes ". . . the detached air of a transcendental spectator, purveying the human condition from the perspective of an accomplished destiny. . . . (Dallmayr, 1972:106).

In works like Toward a Rational Society, Habermas argues for a 'repoliticization' of universities. The crux of this argument is the aim of uniting theory and practice in academic study by introducing critical argument of social norms. What is presupposed is the possibility of consensual agreement reached by an 'enlightened' academic community over the legitimacy of normative issues. This process must being, Habermas suggests, in the politicization of the university itself. Issues concerning the transmission of technically exploitable knowledge and the motives that lie behind the use of universities for this purpose, could be attacked by participants in the symmetrical-type discourse Habermas envisions for his consensus model. This attitude has led him to comment that ". . . both attitudes of political

consequence and motives that form the university as a scientific institution and a social organization. . . ." (1971:9), should be subject to critical discussion.

The difficulties that lie behind his 'politicization' argument are, again, dependent on the role of the emancipatory interest in Habermas's doctrine. Based on what he considers the possibility of 'undistorted' communication between academic participants in a discourse, Habermas allows the distinction between knowledge and practical political issues to erode. Because of his adoption of a type of emancipatory determinism, Habermas allows himself to separate the interests of participants in a formalistic discourse from the practical realm. As Apel has suggested, the difficulty in his attitude resides ". . . in a certain contraction of the categorical framework, in the tendency to collapse theoretical reflection and political practice under the aegis of the stipulated emancipatory interest. . . ." (In Dallmayr, 1972:93).

In the final analysis, it would seem this posture breaks from Habermas's commitment to a dialectical mediation between pure and practical reason. In effect, he divorces theoretical reflection from the practical realm through the formal rules of discourse and yet gives its participants the role of deciding practical, political issues. No longer then, can pure theoretical reflection be seen to have simply an interest in a formal idealized notion of emancipation for the purpose of theoretical argumentation. Instead, Habermas

gives to theoretical reflection the role of transcendentally justifying the nature of conditions within the realm of intersubjective interaction. It would seem then, he makes the same sort of claim he so adamantly opposed in his critiques of transcendental phenomenologies in works like Knowledge and Human Interests.

2. Some Variations and Alternatives

The history of the humanist attempt to mediate empirical and hermeneutic approaches, whether under the guise of pragmatism, ordinary language philosophy, or existential phenomenology, holds to the general principle that man must be studied as a conscious agent rather than an object. Unlike Habermas, however, not all representatives of these traditions seem to fall into the dilemma of a transcendental idealism. Whether this is only a reflection of less detailed methodological programs or in fact, a clearer recognition of dialectical boundaries, is an issue that largely lies beyond the boundaries of this thesis. However, a mention of some plausible alternatives to Habermas's dependence on the emancipatory interest may both, reaffirm the need for a paradigm complementarity in social science, and possibly elucidate the benefits of less 'wholistic' methodologies.

By moving away from the strict commitment to uncovering ideologically distorted communication through the discovery of generalizable interests, it may be possible to more closely approximate a methodological platform that could

maintain a dialectical mediation between the objectifications of the observer and the subjective definitions of the actor. As one author argues, ". . . the sociologist's self-reflection on his own process of concept formation, instead of removing 'bias' should remain in dialectical tension with his study of the actor's formation of concepts in everyday life. . . . " (Brown, 1980:85).

To presuppose an unbias position on the part of the observer, which is essentially what Habermas claims by an unprejudiced counsel of equal partners in an ideal speech situation, opens the way to imposing arbitrary, scientistic rules upon experience. A more realistic attempt at dealing with the infinite complexity of every day life would probably align itself with the assumption that knowledge always remains partially relative. From this it would follow that knowledge gained through a dialectical mediation between the observer's objectifications and the indicators of the subjective constitution of meaning by the actor can be at least 'partially' predictive. In other words, there seems no need to presuppose the necessity of an eventual determinate negation of objective conditions.

Even Freud, upon whose psychoanalytic approach Habermas has based his consensus model, did not conjecture the necessity of the synthesis of reflection.[2] Reflection should not be defined in terms of an ultimate synthesis of knowledge and interest if a method is to remain dialectical. As Jack Douglas stipulates, ". . . we create truth from within by

finding what works, what enables us to understand, explain, piece together, and partially predict our social world. . . our knowledge necessarily remains partially relative, situated, and reflexive. . . ." (1980:5).

By avoiding recourse to universalistic constructions through the acceptance of a doctrine of partial relativism it may be possible to alleviate both the observational reductionism of logico-deductive designs, and the postulate of explanation by casual or mathematical laws, without slipping into a transcendental idealism. Approaches that attempt to mediate between methodologies that treat man as a puppet who responds to environmental stimuli and those grounded in the subjectivist reduction to a unique, 'knowing ego', must retain their dialectical status by not succumbing to a doctrine for the ultimate justification of truth claims. Unfortunately, it is this appeal to verification that seems the factor responsible for Habermas's transgression of his original goals for critical theory. In reviewing Habermas' goals, if one were to separate out problems like: locating the role of science as a product of specific historical processes, gaining an understanding of the ideological boundaries of science in practice, and supplementing the scientific method with dialectical reasoning, then there is reason to believe Habermas shared well established goals with other theorists committed to the construction of alternative models for scientific inquiry.[3]

Ahistorical treatments of human action, and methodologies grounded in a picture theory of truth, reduce the study of man to stimulus-response criteria and thereby are unequipped to deal with 'irrational' motives for behaviour and the subjective interactions that lie outside predetermined boundary conditions. The fallacy of objectivity created by a strict adherence to behaviourist models and the resulting re-structuring of experimental boundary conditions, would seem to vindicate anti-empiricist arguments. So too, is there a well grounded argument for the need to integrate the study of science as a practical, history-bound enterprise.

The production of theoretical knowledge is not transcendentally constituted, but rather, always remains tied to real historical conditions. By going beyond a purely idealized conception of truth, a methodology ultimately loses its connection to practice, to the historical activity of scientists as one dimension of human activity specific to society(ies). Arguments over the proper mode of discourse for the human sciences remain merely exercises in scholastics when proposals are isolated from the practical realm.

Although emphasizing the importance of merging theory and practice is reminiscent of Habermas' goals for critical theory, the dependence of his program on an apriori interest structure, and ultimately, on a determinist theory of an interest in emancipation, circumvents the conception of a consensus model as an idealized, heuristic guide. What has

occurred is the development of transcendental, ahistorical categories, and thus, the loss of the subjective category, man the 'knowing actor'.

While Habermas's thesis of complementarity (the complementarity of understanding and explanation) may be productive as an alternative approach to the study of human action, it remains so, only as long as it is tied to a method for the dialectical mediation of understanding. Habermas's program becomes undialectical when he posits a psychoanalytic method for the 'verification' of truth claims. What is lost by giving the emancipatory interest an independent role is the hypothetical nature of a psychoanalysis grounded in dialectical logic. Habermas leaves himself open to the criticism that he is proliferating just another form of dogmatic historicism by maintaining the inevitability of the merger of reason and interest. For to remain dialectical, a psychoanalytic dialogue must ". . . be a hypothetical sketch which remains within the criticism frame of intersubjective communication and, so far as emancipatory practice is concerned, has the character of a proposal. . . ." (Apel, in Dallmayr, 1977:312).

The potential usefulness of psychoanalysis to theories aimed at merging scientific objectifications and some type of phenomenological explanation should not be disregarded because of the problems entailed in Habermas. The problems of psychological reductionism, the inherently unequal relationship between the analyst and patient, and the

presupposition of the willingness of the patient to submit to analysis, must be taken into consideration when proposing a psychoanalytic method for the social sciences. Yet, these problems may not be insurmountable if psychoanalysis is used only as a heuristic tool in the formulation of a paradigm for complementarity. Paul Ricoeur can be sited as a theorist who not only draws from as varied a tradition as Habermas, but does so without moving beyond an ideal conception for the use of the psychoanalytic method.

While sharing many of Habermas' original goals for critical theory, Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology offers an alternative to Habermas's idealist dilemma. Unlike Habermas, Ricoeur's platform is not grounded in an apriori interest structure, but is based on a triangular dialectic represented by the relations between perception, knowledge, and action. Ricoeur strongly emphasizes his commitment to the notion that a dialectical analysis remain open to further interpretation at all times. Rather than predict an ultimate collapse of the distinction between dialectical categories, as Habermas does with knowledge and interest, Ricoeur maintains that each term in the dialectic further 'dialectizes' itself. That is, each term has the tendency to both problematize or question itself, while also dogmatizing or systematizing itself. The figures that appear below illustrate the basic structure of Ricoeur's triangular dialectic.

FIGURE III

Paul Ricoeur's Triangular Dialectic

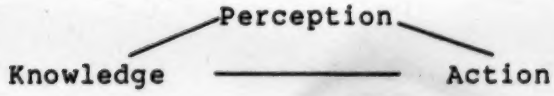
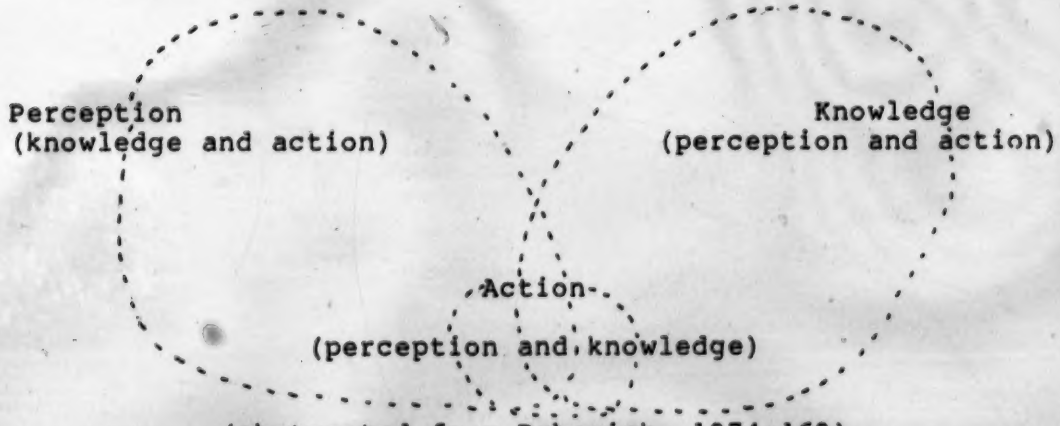


FIGURE IV

The Configuration of Perception, Knowledge and Action



(abstracted from Rehorick, 1974:169).

Like Habermas, Ricoeur's program is grounded in a proposed merger of hermeneutic and empirical methods, and he utilizes the traditional verstehen argument for distinguishing the difference between the explanation of scientific regularities in the generalizing sciences, and interpretative understanding in the individualizing sciences. Similar to that found in Habermas, there is a division of methodological analysis into empirical, hermeneutical, and critical categories; but Ricoeur remains aligned to a

dialectical conception of interpretation that appears to avoid the pitfalls of positing an identity theory by recourse to absolute knowledge criteria. For Ricoeur, the critical method must presuppose an non-finite dialectic of interpretation. The critical method ". . . uncovers the relevance of the facts of experience of objective scientific disciplines by placing these facts into a 'dialogue' with the findings of phenomenological philosophy. . . . However, the resolution in a third term always assumes the form of a 'postponed synthesis'. . . ." (Ricoeur, in Rehorick, 1974:129).

Ricoeur, like Habermas, wants to use Kant and Hegel to set limits on Husserl's phenomenology. Kant's concern for epistemology and Hegel's dialectical conception of history are viewed as checks on Husserl's identity theory of knowledge. For Ricoeur, essence is not to be considered as a real thing, but as an ideal object. As a consequence, he rejects Husserl's method of eidectic reduction as a means of, ultimately, grasping some eternally 'true' essence. At the same time the inductive logic of the natural scientific method is criticized for its failure to recognize that science is a second-order experience. Scientific statement is based on the scientist's perception of the world and as a result, it is always contingent upon the experience of historically-bounded conditions.

Ricoeur has followed Merleau-Ponty's attempt to ground 'intentionality' as a dialectical process between what is

experienced in the world and the process of giving meaning to perceptions. What is suggested is that intention is not, in its origin, objectively meaningful. Rather, man encounters the world both contingently, and non-cognitively at a primary level (i.e., this notion has its roots in Merleau-Ponty's critique of Descartes). Meaning arises from second-order perceptions, it is based therefore, on the 'interpretation' of experience.

While sharing with critical philosophy the interest in uncovering the interplay between pre-cognitive or 'pre-conscious' subjective intention, and the objectifying process whereby meaning is conferred upon perception; Ricoeur appears to be more successful in avoiding the objectivist dilemma that seems to plague Habermas's consensus model. By not offering a program for an ultimate, verification, of truth claims, it may be Ricoeur can utilize a psychoanalytic model for interpreting the dialectical mediation between subjective reports and the objectification of those reports in observational language, without succumbing to the potential dogmatism engendered by ahistorical categories. Ricoeur wants to use psychoanalysis as a heuristic tool where truth remains always the potentially questionable truth of interpretation. Only in this way does truth remain an 'ideal' type.

While Ricoeur separates his philosophy from that of Merleau-Ponty by insisting upon the need to incorporate a linguistic or, hermeneutic component to a phenomenology of

perception; it would seem they share an opposition to any philosophy that defines truth as anything but contingent. Opting for the partial relativism of interpretation does lead to a theoretical reductionism; yet it may be the only way of guarding against a mechanistic dogmatism of a social scientism cloaked in the myth of technocratic objectivity. It may be only through the phenomenological choice of a relativistic-ideal notion of truth that the dialectical mediation between man the producer and man the product of his social world can be preserved in the philosophy of science. As Merleau-Ponty foresaw:

> Truth is not found in certain historical agents nor in the achievement of theoretical consciousness, but in the confrontation of the two, in their practice, and in their oommon life. . . . (trans. by John O'Neil, 1970:28).

Complementarity approaches do offer ways of merging philosophy and the philosophy of science. Their protection from objectivism, at least for now, seems to lie in 'revisable' definitions of truth. Habermas' early goals for a critical theory with a practical intent promised the possibility of sublating the duality of ideographic and nomothetic studies through an interdisciplinary, 'complementarity' model for the philosophy of science. Unfortunately, it seems the raising of an apriori interest structure to an anthropology of knowledge has usurped the role of the dialectical mediation of subjective and objective communication.

NOTES

1. Although there seems no general consensus over the terminology that should be applied to describe Habermas's overall program, Jack Douglas's explanation appears to encompass the parameters of Habermas' dilemmas most succinctly: "Habermas has merged the external puppet model of man with the phenomenologists' internal consciousness model to produce a contorted phenomenological Marxism that retains nothing but the name Marxism and the weaknesses of the rationalist phenomenological model" (1980:89).

2. That reflection remains open to critical re-evaluation in the Freudian model of psychoanalysis is an assumption made in other hermeneutical-dialectical approaches. . . . (i.e., Paul Ricoeur, trans., 1974:160-176).

3. i.e., methodological strategies aimed at acknowledging the 'knowing actor', the application of grounded theory, dramaturgical and ethnogenic approaches, alternative conceptions for the use of psychoanalytic dialogue.

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